Plane Crashes and a Lakenheath Hero.

Aeroplane Crashes in the Lakenheath Area 1942-44.

	TYPE & CRASH SITE	BASE
4 th Nov. '42.	Lockheed Ventura twin engine bomber.	Feltwell
	Stallode Fen. All crew killed	
*3 rd Jan. '42	A Short Stirling four engine bomber from 149 Sqn. based at Lakenheath crashed on the corner of Eriswell Road and Undley Road where the playground is now.	
	One crew member was killed and five were injure	ed.
*See 'A Lakenheath Hero' below.		
2 nd Mar. '43	Lockheed Ventura	Methwold
	Sharpe's Corner on Grime Fen. Three killed.	
	Flying too low at night.	
5 th May. '43	Douglas Mk III Boston twin engine bomber.	Training Flight
	White Fen. Three killed, one injured.	
13 th Aug.'43	Wellington bomber and Spitfire Mk II. Collision	Not known
	Stallode Drove. Possibly battle practice.	
9 th Nov. '43	Stirling Mk III and Hurricane Mk IV.	Air Fighting Development Unit
	Nine killed from the Stirling. Hurricane pilot badly injured.	
	Lodge Farm, Sedge Fen, and Sedge Fen.	
	Silverlock: Lakenheath History Topics. Vol 1.	
1944	American B17 bomber. Crash landed at Wangfor	d. Not known.
	Ken Turner.	
The sound of aircraft was almost over present and the 'planes were of great interest, particularly to		

The sound of aircraft was almost ever-present and the 'planes were of great interest, particularly to village boys who were keen to visit crash sites, racing out of school on their bikes to be first there to collect souvenirs even though they were in quite inaccessible places some distance from the village. Sometimes they saw some very grim sights indeed.

Ken Turner remembers:

"Another plane crash site I visited while still attending school was an American B17, a four engined bomber which had made a crash landing on what at the time was the road to Wangford. It had skidded up the road towards the village and come to rest on the road somewhere around where the little car park is today. (The car park at Maids Cross SSSI?). It was not damaged too much and the crew were not injured. A large number of kids went to see this and some came away with various souvenirs. The next day a policeman turned up at school and told these children to hand in their loot. I had a lovely black leather glove, which I did not think was very dangerous, but what's the use of one glove? I think this would have been late 1943."

In June 1946 Ken his friends

"were able to explore the inside of an American B24 bomber that had made an emergency landing at Lakenheath airfield after being damaged by German guns and fighter planes while on a daylight raid on Germany......we had walked through scores of spent bullet cases, some of which were covered in bloodstains"

*A Lakenheath Hero, Fred Bullen, 1943.

3rdJan. '42 A Short Stirling four engine bomber from 149 Sqn. based at Lakenheath crashed on the corner of Eriswell Road and Undley Road where the playground is now. One crew member was killed and five were injured.

Fred Bullen, who lived nearby, arrived early at the scene of the crash and made heroic efforts to rescue the crew.



A GALLANT RESCUE

Lakenheath Man's Heroism Recognised

Recognition has been officially given to an act of bravery Lakenheath when a local resident risked his life to rescue crew of a bomber which crashed in flames

Some months back, a bomber to you of a Commendation in trashed in the village and Mr. Fred Bullen, an agricultural duct," and also conveying the worker and a member, incidentally, of the R.O.C. and of the British Legion, happened to be near the spot. Not knowing whether or not it was loaded with bombs, and disregarding all personal danger, he rushed to the 'plane to render what service he could to the unfortunate men trapped in the service he could to the unfortunate men trapped in the burning 'plane, and it was largely due to his efforts that all but one of the crew was saved, Mr. Bullen himself resuling the pilot and helping with the other members of the rew.

Service he could to the unfortunation frame trapped in the "sioner (Sir Will Spens)."

The award has been duly mentioned in the "London Gazette" (May 7th) and Mr Bullen has now received the control of his deed and name. With the Cervice of the state o

deed and name. With the Cer Recently, Mr. Bullen received ifficate is a Badge (with a duple of the control of

Fred Bullen. BEM.

Suffolk and Essex Free Press. June 3rd. 1943

Extracts for the Secretary of State for Air's recommendation for the award of a Commendation to Mr. Frederick Sharpe Bullen of 11 High Street, Lakenheath.

"......The aircraft was burning fiercely; ammunition was exploding in all directions and there was a danger that the petrol tanks might explode. Without regard for his personal safety, Mr. Bullen unhesitatingly went to the assistance of the injured crew. With difficulty he managed to open the escape hatch and assist a dazed and injured airman to safety. He returned to the burning wreckage to help another airman to get away who was dazed and in danger of being burnt. Mr. Bullen sustained slight burns. His brave action, which led to the saving of life, is worthy of high praise".

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In recognition of his bravery he was later awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM).

In 1955 Chief Observer Bullen was awarded the ROC long service medal for 12 years' service.