

### Letter written by Margaret White

I missed the Blitz as I lived in Swanage, Dorset but we moved to Blackheath SE London in 1942 as mum was fed up being on her own with just us three young girls. Dad had been called up into the Army.

She had moved to Swanage with her employer in 1922 when she was only 15 years old. She couldn't wait to be reunited with her mum and dad, sister and brother in law, and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins who all lived close together in Blackheath.

We experienced the V1s and V2s. We often saw or heard V1s, Buzz bombs, going over but the closest one to drop anywhere near us was in June 1944 about two streets away and as far as I remember did not even break any of our windows.

However on November 30<sup>th</sup> 1944 at 1.10am a Rocket V2 dropped in Sunfields Place, Blackheath. It blew in all our windows and brought our ceiling down. We lost our front door, the blast blew it away.

We three girls aged nearly eleven, nine and six were in bed and to get downstairs had to be lifted over the banisters as one of the windows had been blown into the house complete with frame and we could not get past.

Or Nan, Auntie Em and Mum all went out to see if they could help, leaving us three girls with Uncle Les and Pop. They soon came back and boiled kettles on the fire and the kitchen range as the gas had been cut off, to make tea for anyone who wanted it.

Nan also took back an old dress for a lady who was half buried but would not be rescued as she was naked.

We lived in Reynolds Place but that night we were with Nan and Pop in Lizban Street. Luckily Auntie Em and Uncle Les were also with us.

The rocket damaged all the houses and church buildings in Sunfields Place, some in Bowater Place and some at the bottom of Lizban Street. The ones that were not completely demolished were too badly damaged to be repaired and were pulled down.

They were slowly replaced with new houses after the war ended by Sunfields place had prefabs for a few years. Auntie Em and Uncle Les lived in one of them as their house at the bottom of Lizban Street was one of the badly damaged that had to be pulled down, from 1949 to 1955.

Luckily none of us were injured not even by the flying glass which was all over the bed and stuck into the wall behind us like darts, but as the house was in such a mess us three girls were taken to a rest centre in Fossdene Road which I believe was a school in peace time, to have a few meals and spend one night, then mum came and brought us home again. Sadly nineteen people were killed that night.