

By Ian Evans

Today, 27th November 2011

Following my recent article regarding the Lancaster that crashed near the village on the night of 2/3rd August 1943, I was contacted via Audlem Online by Mr Barry Hawkins, a former resident of the village. Barry believes he may be the only person still alive that visited the crash site the following morning.

A mischievous 11-year old at the time, he remembers his father, who was a member of St John's Ambulance, telling him of the crashed bomber. He set off across the fields on his own and arrived at the site.

To this day, he finds it amazing that he found himself alone in the field with the aircraft, not even anybody guarding the machine, as was usually the case with an incident of this nature.

Barry has confirmed that the location was Park Farm near Little Heath, which at the time was farmed by a Mr and Mrs Yarwood. The aircraft had made its approach from the East, and came to rest about 400 yds from the farm buildings with its nose buried in a line of trees, which are no longer there. Just before the trees was a gully over which the bomber had rested so forming a bridge over the gully.

My sincere thanks to Barry Hawkins for his reminiscence of this incident, and for pinpointing the location, which in the official documents, were vague and inaccurate. It is purely coincidental that he now lives within 6 miles of Bottesford, where the aircraft was based!

Audlem OnLine note

We are unable to locate Park Farm as such on the map - there are "Park Cottages" on Monks Lane and there is the Parkes farm of course. Does anyone know precisely where Park Farm or the line of trees or gully remembered by Barry Hawkins actually are or were?

We also had a chatbox contribution from Billy Gibbons - "I used to live next door to Eric Buckley in the Prefabs and he told me about the crash and how he and his Dad, Joby, went to the crash site on the night and actually returned with a piece of the wreckage and used it as a poker stand for many years. Does anyone know if one of the crew landed in a tree at the entrance to Hankelow Hall? Apparently, some of his parachute remained in the tree for years after."

Further reading: