

# Wartime West Sussex 1939 – 1945

## BATTLE OF BRITAIN

### Remembering the Guinea Pigs

From *Memories from a town that disappeared, Horsham during World War II* (Horsham Museum, 1989)

By Mrs S. Standing

During the Battle of Britain the skies were full of the ephemeral graffiti of vapour trails, while machine guns stitched death across the sky. Exciting as a cricket match, and the results in the newspapers were announced in the same way. However, the real results were the stench of burning flesh and aviation fuel, which lingered on the crash sites for weeks. Young men without faces, who came from the plastic surgery hospital at East Grinstead to eat at the British Restaurant. One became immune to eating opposite a man with no face between the eyes, only a gaping hole.

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From *Bulletin of the East Grinstead Society May 1990 No. 47: Wartime Memories of an Evacuee Family* by Mrs Eileen Jeffery (East Grinstead Society, 1990)

.....The bus had wooden slat seats and came three times a day. There was no bus on Sunday. I can still see the poor burnt airmen from the Queen Victoria Hospital get on our bus. A woman remarked how disgusting it was to allow them out. I thought how very brave they were to face the outside world with all the skin burnt off their faces and their shrivelled-up hands that couldn't hold anything.

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