

HORSPATH ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Some 70 years ago, the land now occupied by BMW and some of the adjoining local farmland now threatened by developers for a new housing estate, was the site of the largest crashed aircraft dump in southern England during WW2 :-



A small part of the dump looking towards HorSPATH in abt 1944 (*Photo credit Fairfax*)

Known as MPRD (Metal Products Recovery Depot), it stretched from the Garsington Road almost to HorSPATH. It contained over *eight miles* of trackways between the rows of allied aircraft that had crashed in southern England: mostly RAF and USAF, but later in the war many German aircraft as well. It employed many hundreds of personnel; some local, but mainly labourers from elsewhere in the country.

It's objective was to recover as much of the valuable aircraft-grade aluminium as possible, and also to recycle the truly vast amounts of technical equipment

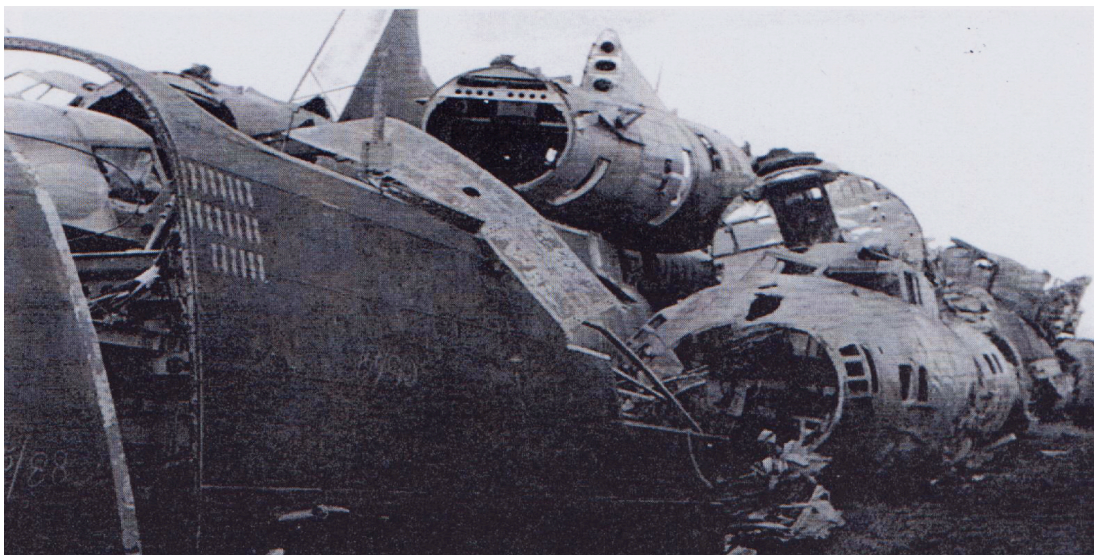
from the downed aircraft. It's reckoned that the MPRD salvaged enough aluminium & technical equipment to create over *five thousand* new aircraft during the war: a truly major contribution to survival of this country, and one we believe that deserves wider recognition.

Our project, then, is aimed at documenting the work of the Depot during and after the war and the many local people involved, also to illustrate the salvage and recycling operations among the towering heaps of crashed aircraft.

We have but a few photographs of the MPRD, but it's possible that many more contemporary photographs exist in old albums or drawers in the homes of the descendants of those who once worked there. Perhaps, too, they might have family memories they could share with us? Even anecdotes that have passed down within the family are most welcome.

All will eventually be documented on our website and acknowledged gratefully. (Website: <http://geoffroyon.co.uk/HAGhome.html>)

Can you help us? If you can, please contact Sally Humphrey <sallylhumphrey@gmail.com>: Geoff Roynon <geoffroyon@gmail.com> or Chris Pym <chrisj.pym@ntlworld.com>



A Lancaster and several USAF B17s on the dump in abt 1944 (Photo credit Fairfax)