

**No.66 DIGITAL
SUPPLEMENT**
late addition

These pages were printed in the *Norwich Evening News* (eveningnews24.co.uk) as we were beginning to put this issue together, but copies were not sent to us until after we had gone to press. So for our overseas and ex-Colmans readers who may not have learned of it, here's another look back at that wartime tragedy we have recalled in earlier editions of *Contact*.

Norwich Through The Decades

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Derek James



From left, Bertha Playford, Bessie Upton, Gladys Sampson, Maud Burrell and Maud Balaam. Top, a flashback image of the Norwich Colman's factory from the 1800s.

Poignant tribute to wartime blast victims

Every year five red roses are placed by a plaque on a wall in Norwich... each one represents a life which was taken on a dark day in the history of the city.

A man stands, bows his head, and remembers. His name is Ken Herbert.

His thoughts are of a time when laughter turned to tears and tragedy on Carrow Hill, off King Street, in the summer of 1940 when enemy aircraft appeared over the city and dropped their deadly load causing death and destruction.

Housewife Kate Lovett died, followed by workers at Barnards

Iron Works, Thorpe Railway Station and Boulton & Paul's Riverside Works, as the planes swept across the city skyline towards Carrow, where Colman's workers were making their way home – laughing and joking as they pushed their bicycles up the steep hill.

As smoke rose, bodies lay broken and bleeding.

There had been no warning of the deadly daytime raid. Before the planes left, a bomb dropped near the Black Tower – killing five women and injuring many others.

It was on that terrible day, when 27 lives were lost, that the people of Norwich knew, without any doubt, they were at war and before the end

of it more than 350 men, women and children would have been killed, many more injured and thousands made homeless.

Life in Norwich would never be the same again.

On July 9, 1940, the Colman's workers who lost their lives were:

→ Maud Pamela Balaam, aged 40, a mustard packer, of 7 St John's Terrace, Ashbourne Street, Norwich.

→ Maud Ethel Burrell, aged 37, a mustard packer, of 21 Mansfield Lane, Lakenham.

→ Bertha Rose Playford, aged 19, a mustard tin box machinist, of 27 Copeman Road, West Pottergate.

→ Gladys Rose Sampson, aged 18, a

mustard tin box machinist, of 29 Gloucester Street, Norwich.

→ Bessie Gladys Upton, aged 36, mustard factory forewoman of 40 Lewis Street, Norwich.

They should never be forgotten and, thanks to one man, they will not be.

It was 15 years ago when Ken, who has just announced he is stepping down from the Colman Pensioners Association, decided to arrange for the plaque to put up at Carrow Hill to the spot where the women lost their lives.

"I always felt I wanted to do something to make sure people never forgot what happened on that day in July 1940," he said, so he

campaigned for the plaque to be put on a wall and the response was overwhelming.

Relatives, friends, Colman's workers, past and present, and people who just wanted to pay their respects turned up for the ceremony one Sunday morning.

"It made it all worthwhile. I was so pleased," said Ken, who has returned to the scene each year to place five red roses on the plaque. A simple gesture which means so much.

Another annual event that Ken has been organising over the years has been the annual service of remembrance at the chapel at Carrow House which is dedicated to

Norwich Through The Decades



Flashback: Philip Dymott, left, shakes hands with Ted Simpson in 2000 after the unveiling of the plaque to commemorate the victims of the bomb blast at Carrow Hill in 1940 which killed five workmates from Colman's, including Ted's sister Gladys.

Colman's workers who lost their lives in two world wars.
"I have had a wonderful time both at Colman's and working with the association but the time has come to step down," said Ken, who was born in Florence and now lives at Harleston.
He went to work for Norfolk County Council at first before moving to Colman's where he was one of the distribution managers. He was asked to become the representative of the pensioners association which still has around 70 members.
"It was a wonderful company to work for. They were really good to us and looked after us well," said Ken.
The association met at the Ferry Boat in King Street - another public house which is now just a memory - before moving to The White Horse at Trowse where they now hold regular meetings.
"We keep an eye on former

workers. I was a visiting scheme trying to make sure pensioners were being received and that people were getting along okay.
"We all feel part of the Colman family. In any day it was the best company you could have wanted to work for," said Ken.
"Thank you Ken for all your work with the association and helping to make sure those who lost their lives at home and abroad will always be remembered.



Ken Herbert, who has made sure the Carrow women killed in the summer of 1940 as they made their way home from work will never be forgotten. Right, their plaque placed in 2000. ALAN BRIDGEMAN LIBRARY

