

Lake Neusiedl. There is air combat with German fighters.

At 11 :50 a new formation appears north of Sumeck, Hungary, 120 planes are heading to north.

At 12:03 many formations are approaching Weiner Neustadt. 120 planes are located over Lake Neusiedl heading to north.

At 12: 15 enemy planes over Parn-dorf. This formation consists of the planes of the five groups of the 5th Bomb Wing. Their target is Fischamend. Initial Point is Parndorf. Fischamend is only six miles away from Ebergassing.

In the East we can see many tiny black dots in the sky. You can hear a far droning which is constantly growing louder. I looked through my binoculars and saw the typical high rudder assembly of a B-17. I shouted to my friend, "They are Fortresses!" These are the first American planes I could see from close up. We knew that this attack was meant for Fischamend.

At 12:19 the first planes reached Fischamend. The air is full of a roaring that is impossible to describe, the roaring of nearly 500 engines. Now the four flak batteries which are positioned around Fischamend begin to fire. You can see the black blasting dots between the planes of the first formation. Suddenly one plane goes down on fire. I can see seven parachutes. Then the ground starts to tremble. The roaring of the engines is mixed now with the bursting of the bombs. Thick smoke rises from Fischamend only six miles away. The whole scene seems unreal. After the bombs are away when the first formation turns south to the direction of Ebergassing I also run into the basement and wait until everything is over.

At 01 :01 p.m. the attack is over.

In the afternoon I rode with my bicycle to Fischamend to see what it looked like. The attack was a success for the bombers. The whole factory was destroyed. Still

today you can see the ruins.

But the first formation dropped the bombs too early. Not all of the bombs hit the factory buildings but also the wood half a mile south where many people had tried to find shelter. 150 dead bodies were found. After this attack the production of the Me 109 plant Fischamend was split up to many other factories. A part of the production came to Ebergassing. On the same day Weiner Neustadt was bombed by the 47th Bomb Wing and Bad Voslau by the 304th Bomb Wing.

A lot was changed after this attack, also in Ebergassing. Two kilometers away from Ebergassing a flak position for two



*A Flak Battery Company*

batteries was built. In the middle of May it was equipped with two 105 mm guns.

In Ebergassing there is a soccer field. On this soccer field a temporary camp with wooden barracks for the foreign workers was set up. The foreign workers came from the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy. These people had to work in the former carpet factory in Ebergassing to produce jigs for the Me 109.

After the April 12 raid, the maxim for an air attack was to try to get out of the village as far as possible. Some men build slit-trenches far away but still in walking or running distance from the village. Many people used the old wine cellars in the villages and out in the fields as shelters. The same was

true during the second raid to my area on April 23 1944 when the target was the Heinkel factory in Schwechat.

April 23 was a Sunday. At one o'clock p.m. heavy enemy bomber formations approaching Carinthia and Styria were announced on the radio. At 01:15 PM the cuckoo call was broadcast. It was kind of scary. All the people who owned a radio had turned it on. When the cuckoo call was sent the only thing you could hear in our house with 16 apartments was a cuckoo calling.

My mother and I had an air alarm emergency bundle prepared. In this bundle we put all our documents and some valuables. We took that bundle, mounted the bicycles and rode about two kilometers away

from Ebergassing to a gravel pit where we had dug our slit-trench. While we were still on our way the sirens hooted air alarm.

Shortly after we arrived at the gravel pit we could see the planes coming in four waves from the east flying over Fischamend to Schwechat. The planes were B-24's. Then the flak batteries around Fischamend began to fire, the blasting clouds hit the last wave of about thirty planes. Suddenly one plane showed a bright flame on the left in-

ner engine. With howling engines the plane fell out of the formation and went down. She began to spin but the pilot pulled her out of the spin and held her in normal position for a short time. Now three crew members jumped out of the plane. But then the plane again got into a spin. At this moment two men jumped out. The plane went down vertically and crashed one mile east of Fischamend. The plane burnt and a large cloud of smoke could be seen. Later the plane exploded probably because of the bombs in the fuselage.

The bomber formation kept on flying and bombed the Heinkel factory and the airfield in Schwechat which is in distance of five miles from Ebergassing.