

young times

A bomb on your doorstep?

Chloe Lambert reports on the thousands of Nazi bombs that are lying undiscovered under the ground

Hundreds of children were evacuated from a school in East Sussex last week when an unexploded bomb from the Second World War was found on a nearby building site.

Builders had been digging up soil near a house when the tip of a metal object was exposed. The 50kg device was thought to date back from 1940 or 1941. Once everyone was safely out of the way, police carried out a controlled explosion.

It might sound like an unusual find, but experts think that there are still thousands of old bombs buried under our streets and fields. German planes carried out sustained shelling attacks over Britain during the Second World War, often timing the bombs to explode after hitting the ground. But historians say that as many as one in ten of them failed to go off. This was because they were faulty, or had even been deliberately fixed so that they wouldn't explode by workers in occupied Europe who were forced to build them.

"It was often sheer carelessness in their manufacture that meant the bombs didn't explode," says Terry Charman, a senior historian at the Imperial War Museum in London.

As they landed, these bombs made craters in the ground. They were then covered with earth and left undiscovered.

Sixty years on, the devices are still showing up in all manner of places. A pub landlady in Dorset got a shock last year when she discovered a bomb in her back garden. A bomb was also found by construction workers on the new Olympic site in East London.

When a shell is found, the area is cleared and experts are brought in to defuse it or detonate it in a safe way. Bombs can become inert over time but sometimes, when they are disturbed, the timing mechanism restarts.

Last summer, Tube trains and traffic in East London were brought to a standstill when the largest Second World War bomb was discovered in 30 years was found in a river. It was the size of a grown man, and

weighed about 1,000 kg. When a team began to defuse it, it started to tick and ooze liquid! The brave engineers doused it with liquid to make it safe.

Meanwhile, some people don't see what all the fuss is about. In 2007, police rushed round to a pensioner's house in Surrey when they discovered she was using an old bombshell as a doorstep.



The massive 1,000kg bomb that was found in East London last year

PUZZLES

Puzzle of the day: Square deal

To complete the puzzle, write the names of the grid, then read down the yellow squares to find a mystery word



1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Yesterday's answer 1. (a) Logging
2. (c) Botany Bay

Yesterday's puzzle 1. Cornflakes 2. Muesli
3. Porridge 4. Granola 5. Rice puffs

Book review



Tiddler
by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler
Reviewed by Amy Geldard, 5



Tiddler is a little fish who is always making up stories about why he is late for school. His friend Johnny Dory thinks they are great stories and tells them to his granny. One day a nasty thing happens to Tiddler and he gets lost deep in the ocean. Luckily everyone knows about him because of his stories and they help him back home.

My favourite fish was Johnny Dory. The scariest bit was when Tiddler got lost in the middle of the sea and there were lots of ugly fish with big teeth.

The people who wrote this book also did *The Gruffalo*, which is one of my favourites.

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