

# Weald House Crockham Hill Memorial



The memorial pictured above is located in the churchyard of the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Kent. With the exception of 11 month old Michael May from Malmesbury, Wiltshire, virtually all of those commemorated on the memorial died during the early hours of Friday 30 June 1944. By the end of June 1944, just prior to the start of the 'official' evacuation, 231 children under the age of sixteen including babies had already lost their lives as the result of German flying bombs, which were of course more commonly called 'Doodlebugs.' In addition to the mounting fatalities by that time, approximately another 500 children were hospitalized resultant of 'Doodlebug' injuries. Sadly the worst single incident resulting in the deaths of young children was that at Crockham Hill near Westerham, Kent, that are commemorated on the memorial above. In 1944, Little Mariners at Froghole, Crockham Hill, was being used by the London County Council as a home for evacuated children, but Little Mariners was severely damaged by incendiary bombs, and the staff and children were then moved to Weald House (now rebuilt and called Hoplands) which is situated on the edge of Crockham Hill Common. At 0337 hours on Friday 30 June 1944, a German V1 flying bomb was hit by anti-aircraft fire from a battery situated on the North Downs, and had been badly damaged before it could reach its intended target of London. In theory the flying bomb should have either exploded when hit, or landed somewhere in the miles of open fields with no loss of life, but for some reason on its final descent it was thought to have been carried along on warm air thermals, and when crashing at Mariners Hill it had struck a tree which then deflected into Weald House. Twenty-two children and eight female staff were killed in the tragedy, and only two of the children survived; 1 year old Peter Findley life was saved because he had contracted measles, and at the time of incident he had been put in another nearby house for isolation. The other surviving child was Peter John Inwood whose mother was one of the victims of the tragedy. Early in the Second World War, Weald House, Crockham Hill was earmarked for use as a Reserve Headquarters for the Kent County Council. It is something of a tragic irony, that one of the main reasons why Weald House had been chosen by the Kent County Council for the above use, was due to the fact that its isolated position on the edge of Crockham Hill Common, it was assessed by the War Planning Committee to ever be an enemy target. When transcribing the various Kent civic war memorials etcetera, for inclusion on [www.kentfallen.com](http://www.kentfallen.com) the transcriber now always checks to see if anybody has not been commemorated on the relevant form of remembrance. The photographs which accompany these brief commemorations, were kindly provided for inclusion here by Susan F. The memorial is inscribed as under:-

**“IN MEMORY OF THE NURSES, STAFF AND CHILDREN OF THE  
L.C.C. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL AT WEALD HOUSE, CROCKHAM  
HILL. KILLED BY ENEMY ACTION ON JUNE 30 1944.”**

## Roll of Honour-Staff Casualties

**FISHER, HILDA.** L.C.C. Staff Nurse.

Aged 25.

Daughter of Herbert James and Charlotte V. Fisher (née Turner) of 8 Elliott Street, Milton, Gravesend, Kent.

**GERRARD, ANNIE ELIZABETH.** L.C.C. Staff Nurse.

Aged 22.

Daughter of Frederick George Gerrard and Jane E. Gerrard (née Belcher) of 21 Widmore Road, Hillingdon Heath, Middlesex.

**GOODWIN, KATHLEEN MARY.** L.C.C. Staff Nurse.

Aged 24.

Daughter of Charles George and Alice Goodwin of 49 Queen Mary Avenue, Moordown, Bournemouth, Hampshire.

**INWOOD, CATHERINE.**

Aged 31.

Daughter of the late Robert Inwood.

Catherine's home address was 69 Whitbread Road, Brockley, London. Her son Peter John Inwood was one of the two children who survived the tragedy, and it would appear that Peter was the only child to actually survive the actual devastation of the flying bomb explosion.

**MERRY, EILEEN.** L.C.C. Staff Nurse.

Aged 22.

Daughter of Walter E. and Winnifred Merry of 6 Conway Road, Cwmparc, Rhondda, Glamorgan, Wales.

**POCOCK, NAOMI.**

Aged 25.

Daughter of R. Pledger.

Wife of Private Frederick Pocock, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

**STROULGER, OLIVE LETITIA.**

Aged 59.

Daughter of the late George William Stroulger.

Olive's home address was 112 St. John's Way, Upper Holloway, Middlesex.

**WILKINSON, ELSIE.** L.C.C. Staff Nurse.

Aged 33.

Daughter of Maria Wilkinson of 13 Eastwood Street, Liverpool, Lancashire, and of the late George Wilkinson.

## Roll of Honour-Child Casualties

**ANSELL, CHRISTOPHER NEIL.**

Aged 11 months.

Son of Sydney Thomas and Olive Marjorie Ansell.

**BLATCH, MICHAEL.**

Aged 12 months.

Son of Mrs. R. Blatch.

**CHANNING, VERONICA ANN.**

Aged 2.

Daughter of M. V. Channing of 175 Peckham Rye, London.

**COBURN, WILLIAM JOHN.**

Aged 2.

Son of William Henry and Maud Rose Coburn of 76 Clissold Road, Stoke Newington, London.

**CODY, COLLEEN MARY KATHLEEN.**

Aged 12 months.

Daughter of John Alfred James Cody (H.M. Forces), and Kathleen Matilda Cody of 224 Balmoral Avenue, Hayes, Middlesex.

**CODY, JOHN MICHAEL PATRICK.**

Aged 2.

Daughter of John Alfred James Cody (H.M. Forces), and Kathleen Matilda Cody of 224 Balmoral Avenue, Hayes, Middlesex.

**DEVINE, JACQUELINE ANN.**

Aged 16 months.

Daughter of Mrs. Devine, of 17 Allesley Old Road, Coventry.

**FOTHERGILL, KENNETH.**

Aged 2.

Son of Mr. F. Fothergill.

**HILL, DAVID.**

Aged 13 months.

Son of Peggy Elizabeth Hill of Pursers, Bramdean, Alresford, Hampshire.

**HOWGEGO, JOHN DAVID.**

Aged 18 months.

Son of Joseph Howgego.

**IRELAND, RONALD JOHN ERNEST.**

Aged 2.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Ireland of 49 Vauban Estate, Spa Road, Bermondsey, London.

**KNOWLES, CYRIL RICHARD.**

Aged 20 months.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Cyril Knowles of 36 Furness Road, Harlesden, Middlesex.

**MAY, MICHAEL F.J.**

Died 1 July 1944. Aged 11 months.

Son of F. May of 23 Gaston Road, Malmesbury, Wiltshire.

Michael was injured on 30 June 1944, and died whilst he was a patient being treated for his injuries, at the War Memorial Hospital, Edenbridge, Kent.

**NEWMAN, JOHN.**

Aged 10 months.

Son of Albert Edwin and Agnes Margaret Newman of 94 Lilford Road, Camberwell, London

**O'MEARA, CHRISTINA SHEILA MARGARET.**

Aged 15 months.

Daughter of Albert William O'Meara of 54 Prince of Wales Mansions, Battersea, London.

**POCOCK, NOEL.**

Aged 12 months

Son of Private Frederick Pocock, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, and of Mrs. Naomi Pocock (née Pledger). Noel's mother was one of the adult casualties.

**SCOTT, WILLIAM EDGAR.**

Aged 16 months.

Son of Violet Edith Scott of 33 Princess Alice House, Dalgarno Way, North Kensington, London, and of the late William George Scott.

**SILK, BRENDA VERA.**

Aged 16 months.

Daughter of Edward and Lilian Nora Silk of 16 Lanfranc Road, Roman Road, Bow, London.

**SUTTON, PATRICIA MAY.**

Aged 6 months.

Daughter of N. W. P. and B. M. Sutton of 97 Hall Farm Cottages, Garboldisham, Diss, Norfolk.

**VANGO, ELIZABETH ANN.**

Aged 12 months.

**WOODS, MARGARET HELENA.**

Aged 15 months.

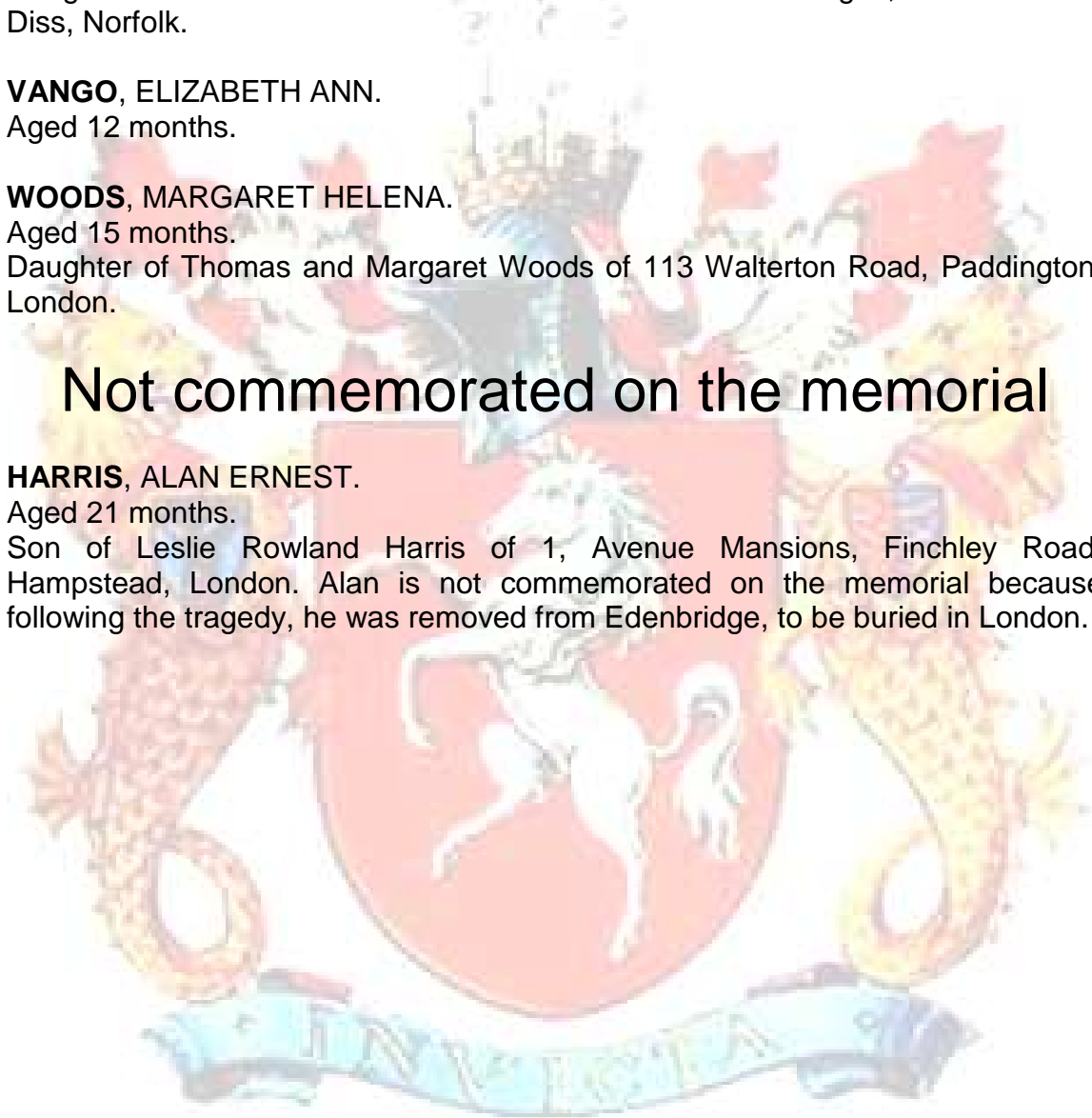
Daughter of Thomas and Margaret Woods of 113 Walterton Road, Paddington, London.

## Not commemorated on the memorial

**HARRIS, ALAN ERNEST.**

Aged 21 months.

Son of Leslie Rowland Harris of 1, Avenue Mansions, Finchley Road, Hampstead, London. Alan is not commemorated on the memorial because following the tragedy, he was removed from Edenbridge, to be buried in London.





The Weald House Memorial with kerbed lawn and garden, in the churchyard of the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Kent.

