OFCRASHISSTILLFRESH

KENNER Residents Now Hear Jet Thunder

KENNER, La. (AP) — It is a hard fact of life that airliners taking off from New Orleans International Airport often pass low and loud over this bedroom community.

The roar of jet engines shakes windows in City Hall and in the modest homes of Morningside, a green and pleasant residential area huddled under the flight path.

People who live here simply pause in their conversations while the roar passes, not like they were in a cinematicpresentation.

For years, the major irritant was the interference with television signals. Planes overhead made the screen flutter and flip. But cable TV does away with that problem.

Still, Mrs. Landry, a 72-year-old mother stands about 10 feet from the first house crushed when the 86-ton airliner hit last Friday at 4:10 p.m.

She bought her house seven years ago with money from her late husband's life insurance. At the time, she said, she didn't even notice it was under the takeoff path that winds away from the holocaust.

Now, she can't rid her mind of the recurring vision of two little girls afame.

"I don't know how I can stay in this house," she wept. "I can still see that baby come out of that house and she was burning. My mother is still in shock. We are living on heart pills, nerve pills, pressure pills."

By contrast, Ruth Pourciau, who lives across the street was bearing up.

Moving at about 200 miles an hour, turned on its side so the wings pointed up and down, the airliner had crashed past the window of her kitchen, where she stood at the stove stirring a shrimp stew.

A wing tip plowed a shallow furrow in the Pourciau lawn, nicked a chunk out of a rotten stump, and sliced between two trees, lopping limbs off both.

"I heard a big crash," she said. "I looked out the window and leaves were flying." She added, "I didn't hear it coming because I don't have planes. I have lived here 20 years and I leave planes out. Friends say, 'How do you stand it with airliners going over,' and I say I don't even hear them."

Mrs. Pourciau, alone at home, ran outside. Pan Am Flight 759 had lifted into a great ball of fire. Lisa Baye, 6, and her 7-year-old friend, Rachel Schultz, were running across the street toward her clothing in shreds, their flesh charred.

"If I live to be a hundred I'll never forget it," she said. "It was like they were scared, not like they were in pain. They didn't feel it yet. A preacher who lived down the street said, running, 'Don't touch them, don't touch them. Get sheets.' So we put sheets around them. They sat on the carpet on the floor until the ambulance came. There was nothing we could do for them."

Lisa died at a hospital nine hours later. Rachel, critically burned, is at Shriners Burn Institute in Galveston, Texas. Ruth Pourciau walked away from the holocaust when told that police wanted to use carpentry and garages for a morgue in which to put bodies and bits of bodies.

"I could take that," she said.

But three days later she returned, able to cope — marveling that even in the midst of carnage she had gone into her kitchen and turned off the gas burner under the shrimp stew she left.

"You never know what you will do," she said. "But I know we won't be moving anywhere. I couldn't come closer to death than I came last Friday. That's how I feel about it."

The impact of the 727 on Kenner muck, which was swamped before it was drained, was such a violent jolt it cracked brick walls on several houses otherwise untouched by the explosion. One of them was George Bode's house, for example. Damage to the foundation was so severe it was condemned and leveled by bulldozers in a cleanup which was nearly complete today. Nine homes cleared away, the last splinter and brick. Even concrete foun- dation slabs were being broken up and hauled off in trucks.

Bode, a customer service agent for Delta Air Lines, was at work when the crash happened. His wife, Opal, was in rear bedroom with one of her two children and a niece. She scrambled out the back with both children. They escaped unharmed.

"It depends on her emotional state whether we rebuild here," said Bode. "I tell her that bad things can happen anywhere. We could move across the lake and a tree might fall on the house. But it all depends. She might feel that every time she looks out the window she's thinking of this."

The horde of sightseers that clogged the area Sunday, when search crews were still picking up bits and pieces of people, was a frequent source of complaint.

"I don't know how I can stay in this house. I'm looking for a place to move on," he said, pointing out one of the houses. This is directly high on the embankment. We're just lucky to get off, so I don't want to complain."