

BBP10 Lily Foster

SPEAKERS

Lily Foster, Susan Kelly

Susan Kelly 00:00

Do you remember the outbreak of the war?

Lily Foster 00:04

I remember hearing it on the radio.

Lily Foster 00:07

Our radio was on a shelf high up on the wall where we couldn't get at it, I just remember it being announced y'know; "Today we are at war with Germany". I remember that yeah.

Lily Foster 00:22

When the American servicemen came over, so when I came home from school I had to fill 700 cartons of milk and my brother would have went into the camp and they all bought those cartons of milk.

Lily Foster 00:36

We also supplied the town of Kesh with milk and we got the swill because we had a lot of pigs (laughs) and we got the swill from the camp but I don't remember much about except a couple of planes that went out and didn't come back.

Susan Kelly 01:00

You could see them?

Lily Foster 01:01

Pardon.

Susan Kelly 01:01

Could you see the planes?

Lily Foster 01:03

Now well we lived as I say near Castle Archdale, Lough Erne, the seaplanes were on the water there, that was lovely to see them at that time.

Lily Foster 01:15

My father actually drew the sand to slipways for, to make build that place and prepare it for sea planes landing there.

Lily Foster 01:27

I didn't know anybody actually that was in the war, except my cousin.

Lily Foster 01:33

One of my cousins from America, he was over with, with the servicemen.

Susan Kelly 01:39

But there were a lot of American soldiers around Castle Archdale.

Lily Foster 01:44

Yeah, there was a lot of Americans around there.

Susan Kelly 01:46

And you brought the milk to them.

Lily Foster 01:49

Yeah.

Susan Kelly 01:50

And did you have much chat with them?

Lily Foster 01:53

No, no, because it was my brother brought the milk y'know he went in and stood in the camp.

Lily Foster 01:59

I only filled the cartons (laughs) in the dairy that we had.

Susan Kelly 02:05

Did they give you any sweets? Did it give your brother any sweets?

Lily Foster 02:08

Oh they did, yes they did yes, there was sweets and nylons and nylons, but then I wasn't old enough.

Lily Foster 02:15

I was only about fifteen about the time.

Lily Foster 02:18

So I wasn't old enough to go into the camp really to go to any of the things, the dances and all that were there round about at that time.

Susan Kelly 02:27

Was your mother not worried about you dating an American soldier?

Lily Foster 02:31

No! (Laughs) We had them out then in the Summer.

Lily Foster 02:35

They would have come out, twenty of them would have come out to help with the hay-making

Lily Foster 02:40

y'know give them a break from the camp and my father, my mother would have fed them all,

Lily Foster 02:46

made them a meal so it was a change from camp life.

Susan Kelly 02:50

And did you have any chat with them at that time?

Lily Foster 02:52

I can't remember much about that, because I had a hearing problem then too.

Lily Foster 02:58

So I wasn't able to really communicate with different voices, even then y'know because I had the hearing problem.

Susan Kelly 03:09

And did the war impact much on your life in Fermanagh?

Lily Foster 03:15

Well, it did in a way I suppose, although it didn't affect us all that much apart from having the windows all blacked out.

Lily Foster 03:28

My dad was in the Home Guard, he was a Captain in the Home Guard, but we were just...

Susan Kelly 03:36

What did he do in the Home Guard, do you know?

Lily Foster 03:38

He was Captain. They would have went out on patrol. You know just locally. Yeah. Yeah.

Susan Kelly 03:47

Were there many evacuees where you were living?

Lily Foster 03:50

There was yes.

Lily Foster 03:51

There was ten that came to our school from, that was 1941 after the big raid in Belfast in 1941, Easter time.

Lily Foster 04:03

And there was a man, a farmer who had a big house, took in a whole family and their cousins.

Lily Foster 04:11

Ten children came to our school, Letterkeen, I have a photo of that on my printer there too (laughs).

Susan Kelly 04:21

What were the children like?

Lily Foster 04:23

Oh they were very good, very good, they had come from Crumlin Road, from a wee terrace house, a wee kitchen house really, and there was their mother and six children and four cousins.

Lily Foster 04:37

And the mother, the farmer was living alone, he had never married, he taught the mother how to bake and cook on the hearth fire and the ten lived there I think for something like four years and they loved it.

Lily Foster 04:54

I was talking to one of them today, she's still in Donaghadee, she wrote a lot of stories into Roamer about that time.

Susan Kelly 05:05

What about when the war ended? Do you remember that in Belfast there were street parties?

Lily Foster 05:11

Aye well we weren't... we were in the country so there was no street parties

Susan Kelly 05:16

Or farm parties?

Lily Foster 05:18

You'd have to ask Renee that one. They would have all had street parties.

Susan Kelly 05:25

Was there any celebration in Fermanagh about the end of the war?

Lily Foster 05:29

I can't remember.

Lily Foster 05:30

I can't remember that, we may have had right enough at our Sunday school.

Lily Foster 05:37

I have a photo of that somewhere too of us all and that could have been because there was a lot of evacuees in that picture I've a picture of that too but...

Lily Foster 05:49

so that must have been war-time y'know when that was taken because there was about eight or ten evacuees in the picture.