

WM0817 Margaret Williamson

**SPEAKERS**

Una Walls, Margaret Williamson

**Margaret Williamson 00:00**

I was born off Donegal Pass and I was born in 58 Furnham Street. And, uh, I went to school in Donegal Pass

**Margaret Williamson 00:12**

Well while, while we were living in it, that time during the war.

**Margaret Williamson 00:19**

And we, we used to hear the planes and all going over and you used to know by the sound of them that they were the enemy and then I lived at the Gasworks you see and there was a big mine went, dropped into it but it didn't go off.

**Margaret Williamson 00:37**

But it would have got the whole district, obliterated it, but, uh, our house, the windows and all were broken in it. Well that was a...

**Una Walls 00:47**

Do you remember how you felt, as a child, you know, you were young?

**Margaret Williamson 00:51**

Well, of course I'd had a bit of worry because of the war, you know.

**Margaret Williamson 00:58**

And, uh, they had built the wee air raid shelters you know, but it turned out that they weren't really awful grand, you know.

**Una Walls 01:09**

Where did they build them?

**Margaret Williamson 01:10**

Well they built them in your street. I lived at the end house you know and there was one there, and then there was one at the front.

**Margaret Williamson 01:20**

And they put them up with, oh I remember them getting built and all, you know.

**Margaret Williamson** 01:25

And, uh, but we weren't in any of them.

**Margaret Williamson** 01:30

I stayed with a half-sister in a street just beside it and we, we just went in under the table, you know, when a bomb, but some parts was really devastated and I remember afterwards we went away up to see all the places that were bombed. But then...

**Una Walls** 01:49

Whenever you went up to see them, what do you remember about that?

**Margaret Williamson** 01:51

Oh it was terrible, seeing them all, all the rubble and all, and then we heard about the people and all that had, had perished and been killed and all.

**Margaret Williamson** 02:02

It was very, very sad that. But then we went, we were evacuated. And saying that, everyone says when you tell them that, oh I was evacuated to the Slieve Donard hotel.

**Margaret Williamson** 02:14

And there was an English couple and they just made the money out of us and skimped with what they were doing with us. We had no heating, and we got very little food and all.

**Margaret Williamson** 02:27

Went to two schools in Newcastle too. So my mother, she had her head screwed on, and she decided she wasn't going to stay there any longer and we went near Annalong and we got into a wee cottage there.

**Una Walls** 02:42

I was just going to ask you about the Slieve Donard, you know, whenever you were there. What was it like, you know, what the state was it in- had the war affected it? Was it...?

**Margaret Williamson** 02:52

No, no just that they weren't bringing in people, it was open to the evacuees, and they weren't bringing the people and apparently the room that we got had belonged to Banes, the bakery people, you know.

**Margaret Williamson** 03:06

There was a wee grate in it and all, but there was no, no coal, we didn't get anything to heat it and it was the dead of winter.

**Margaret Williamson** 03:14

We were there, my brother was seven years old in 1943, think that was right, or '41, '41. And, uh, it was his birthday and that was the day that Pearl Harbour was bombed and he was seven.

**Margaret Williamson** 03:31

Well they gave us a wee bit of a party that night but they started, and we had to go out, there was a train place beside us, and we had to go and pick up the coal from it and get wee bits of wood and all to get a wee bit of heat in the fire.

**Margaret Williamson** 03:49

Then they didn't feed us well either because my mother got a wee kipper one time and she says look at the size of me and she goes to the chef and says look at the size of me and look at the size of it, do you think it's badly proportioned.

**Margaret Williamson** 04:04

Wee tiny kipper or something.

**Margaret Williamson** 04:06

And then she always told me to drink plenty of milk, there was always plenty of milk, so I drank the milk because I liked the milk you know. But then we went, we went to the other wee place.

**Una Walls** 04:16

And I wonder how that worked with your ration books? Did the hotel take your ration books?

**Margaret Williamson** 04:22

They did, ahah, but I think my mummy managed to get them back anyway.

**Margaret Williamson** 04:27

Because we had, we had to be fed where we went to live, you know.