

## WM0819 Betty Cowan

### SPEAKERS

Una Walls, Betty Cowan

#### **Betty Cowan** 00:00

In Drumbo, in the ARP, we had two ambulances, and Drumbo sits on a hill and you could see Belfast all around and we heard...

#### **Betty Cowan** 00:11

We were at an ARP gathering when the siren went, so, of course we all rushed out and we actually saw the bombs fall.

#### **Betty Cowan** 00:21

We distinctly saw the bombs fall- it was so clear.

#### **Betty Cowan** 00:25

And we didn't know what was going to happen.

#### **Betty Cowan** 00:27

And there was no telephone in the hall, but the... the shop in the village, I think there was an arrangement made that they would phone him, so they must have phoned him.

#### **Betty Cowan** 00:39

Then my husband drove one of the ambulances and then there was another girl from Hillhall and she drove the other one and they set off.

#### **Betty Cowan** 00:48

They were to meet somewhere about the Malone Road, I don't know exactly where.

#### **Betty Cowan** 00:54

Well then... they weren't actually sent into the middle of the bombing, they really helped more getting people injured and people, getting people out of Belfast, you know.

#### **Betty Cowan** 01:09

I can tell you that that we actually witness the bombs and if you're up at Drumbo now, it's like a fairyland when you look over Belfast, right round to Dunmurry and Lisburn, its all now, the whole place.

#### **Una Walls** 01:23

How did you feel when you saw the bombs?

**Betty Cowan** 01:26

Oh terribly frightened, I can remember being very frightened and I wasn't...

**Betty Cowan** 01:33

didn't live so far from the hall and when I had the opportunity.

**Betty Cowan** 01:38

I remember running home to tell my mother and father and I can and then I went back, because we didn't know what we would be asked to do, really.

**Una Walls** 01:48

Mhmm.

**Betty Cowan** 01:49

We were there and they knew we were there and they could come, it was really after they got Belfast sorted out, that then they asked us you see.

**Una Walls** 02:01

When you saw the bombs falling, what did you see after that? Did you see the fires?

**Betty Cowan** 02:06

Yes and the big bangs you know, and then fires, you could see fires yes.

**Betty Cowan** 02:12

Oh, it was terrible. It was very, very frightening.

**Betty Cowan** 02:16

I mean, we could hear the planes.

**Betty Cowan** 02:18

Not to my knowledge did they come over, they must have come in from the sea, you know, over the Lagan you know that because we could hear oh it all the time.

**Betty Cowan** 02:31

But we heard them at different times, but we didn't know... it didn't stop them.

**Betty Cowan** 02:36

These planes you would always afraid, when you heard a plane, whether it was our own or what you know.

**Una Walls** 02:42

Where there shelters in Drumbo? Air raid shelters?

**Betty Cowan 02:46**

No I didn't, there was no air raid shelter in Drumbo, but there was air raid shelters at different places, you know.

**Betty Cowan 02:55**

But do you see there had been before that, the sirens would have gone off and then there was nothing you see.

**Betty Cowan 03:04**

And I think the people of Belfast didn't... when the sirens went, they didn't take an awful lot of heed.

**Betty Cowan 03:12**

I would think that that was the worst thing that they should have gone to the shelters, but because they were used with that you know, and not.

**Betty Cowan 03:23**

Like I can remember too, the siren going off and I was going with a girlfriend to the cinema in the Ormeau Road.

**Betty Cowan 03:35**

I think the siren went off and we said "What will we do?" and then we were nearly there and we went.

**Betty Cowan 03:43**

Well, I didn't tell my mother because I would have been... I don't know, I don't mean to say she'd have hit me, but she would have been very very cross!

**Una Walls 03:53**

When you're young, you're carefree.

**Betty Cowan 03:54**

Oh yes.

**Betty Cowan 03:55**

I mean we thought well, we're here now we might as well go in, but we shouldn't have you know, and there was quite a number of people in it, I can't remember what was on.

**Betty Cowan 04:07**

The film that we went to, it must have been something particular because it was the Ormeau Road and I can remember walking up the Ormeau Road.