

WM0833 Jean Blair

SPEAKERS

Jean Blair, Una Walls

Jean Blair 00:00

Well, when I left school, the NAAFI was the first place that I did work.

Una Walls 00:08

Tell me what the NAAFI was.

Jean Blair 00:10

The NAAFI is, it was an organisation that it had... it had canteens for soldiers, they'd go in and get a cup of tea or, well, something like that something to eat.

Jean Blair 00:27

And then, this goods store was... there was a shop for there were families living in the camp, and they were able to come and purchase things in this store.

Una Walls 00:40

I was just going to say, for people who don't know, where was the NAAFI?

Jean Blair 00:45

Where was the café?

Una Walls 00:46

Where was the NAAFI?

Jean Blair 00:47

Oh the NAAFI, it was in World's End Camp in Ballykinlar.

Una Walls 00:53

Was that an official name for it?

Jean Blair 00:55

That was the official name for it World's End Camp 907G.

Una Walls 00:59

I've never heard that... 907G... And so tell me a little bit more about what it looked like, what the canteen looked like, and what a typical day there was like.

Jean Blair 01:10

Oh, well, the wee shop was quite small, just like an ordinary shop and then the store was a bit bigger and there were quarters there where the boys lived.

Jean Blair 01:25

It wasn't... it wasn't all that big because, most of the stores were... were brought in fresh, like each day.

Jean Blair 01:37

So we didn't... we didn't, we didn't have that... well there might have been some stuff that not perishable that we had.

Jean Blair 01:48

Well, the Americans whenever they came, they were... oh, they were totally different from our own soldiers.

Jean Blair 01:56

They were more sloppy and more more more talkative and you sort of you couldn't get them out, they would come and they would want to talk, but then... well they never bothered us too much.

Jean Blair 02:15

But they loved jelly rolls, that was swiss rolls that they came in for.

Jean Blair 02:21

I think that they had... they had concerts and I don't know, there must have been some sort of a wee hall or something. I can't just remember.

Jean Blair 02:32

I never went to them because you see I went home at night, I cycled there- seven miles there and seven miles back every day.

Jean Blair 02:46

Well that was common.

Jean Blair 02:48

Well when I think one of our big days was the Queen Elizabeth came.

Jean Blair 02:53

So, the camp was closed that day, there was no one allowed in.

Jean Blair 03:01

So, the manager closed the shop and then we could work around wherever she was going and we saw her oh lots of different places.

Jean Blair 03:10

She had a lovely blue outfit on.

Jean Blair 03:14

She looked lovely.

Una Walls 03:16

Did you work in the NAAFI all during the war then?

Jean Blair 03:19

Oh yes, I did. I worked to the end of the war and I left then and I got married the next year.