

[<Files\HFRT001 Joan Garwood>](#) - § 1 reference coded [9.59% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 9.59% Coverage

Looking back on it.... oh the other thing was,, any particular memories of the day the War ended - VE Day. Any particular memories of that?

Do you know, that's a bit vague 'cause there was two, you see? There was the VE Day and VJ Day and they get a bit muddled up and I'm not quite sure. I think we went to the city - I'm almost sure we did on VE Day. But I can't remember what we did in the evening - I really can't. I've tried to think. VJ Day we went to a Dance because I can remember and it was very hot - ever so hot because I can remember that quite clearly. But I can't remember, I asked my sister in law as well and she couldn't really remember what we did. But I'm sure we went to the city and, I mean, you know, it was quite exciting because people were... And, we used to get, umm, we had the King and Queen come once – there was a parade around and that going through, you know, that going through the streets, seeing them. They must have come to boost us, I suppose. Yeah.

I've heard other people who were, like you, teenagers during the War, actually saying that it was almost like the happiest time of their life. It was a really exciting time to be alive.

Yes, it probably was, really - in some ways, I suppose. 'Cause you... I mean, we didn't think that we were going to lose. It didn't occur to us that we'd lose. We just took it for granted that we'd win and we used to listen to Hitler and Lord Hawhaw and everybody else, you know? Because, I mean, no television – fancy a World without television!

[<Files\HFRT003 William Patterson>](#) - § 1 reference coded [3.55% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.55% Coverage

Well VE Day was a bit of an anti climax in many respects. We were virtually living normal lives by that time. But, of course, all the younger children were clamouring for a party - some of the *bigger adults too!* *And, um... I can't remember - I don't know if it*

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was actually on VE Day itself, or just shortly afterwards, but all the available tables were brought out into the street and joined together and covered with sheets or something. There were all sorts of things that cover tables with!

And all the women would get together and, of course, although a lot of the stuff was rationed, it was amazing where these... where it all – where all the food - came from. There was an all... there must have been, oh, I suppose about fifty, sixty young children. And then us older kids - there'd be...(exhale) those of us that were still around – um, oh, twenty or thirty.

[<Files\HFRT004 Edith Wood>](#) - § 1 reference coded [1.50% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.50% Coverage

Do you remember any celebrations that you had? Did you have any...?

Oh, I didn't but the younger children did - they had a big party down the middle of the street, yes. They brought the piano out of

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somebody's house and it poured with rain! (laughing)

So it was just for children?

It was just for the young children, yes. 'Cause they'd all come home from evacuation you see. And they were... they had this table and everybody supplied something. And...

[<Files\HFRT005 Betsy Stanley>](#) - § 1 reference coded [7.68% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 7.68% Coverage

I want to end with - it's got down here, you've got a VE Day memory? What's your memory of VE Day?

Well, I was home on leave. We lived in Paddington then - Aucknall Road, off the Harrow Road. The boy I was courting was in Africa. I was a bit down in the dumps and lonely. How you can be lonely in a crowd, I don't know, but you can. And my mother – stepmother - and father had gone off to some do with his army thing. I thought, well, I'd take meself up to London. Well, you see them all gawping, waiting for Winnie and the Queen and the Princesses and the King to come out on the balcony?! You must have seen all those. I'm in there somewhere - screaming and hollering, but as lonely as can be. I've never felt so lonely in all my life. All those people and you're lonely. Because you've got nobody of your own to hang onto. I thought that was sad, you know? I got over it!

Did you feel....? What was the feelings that you had?

Oh, I mean, it was jubilation, really. I mean it was all over, wasn't it? We were being de-mobbed and we were.... you know, it was a lovely feeling. It was all over. I mean, people were hugging and kissing complete strangers, dancing around in circles. But they weren't yours. But, it was... I don't know, I can't explain it. It was a wonderful feeling to think all those people, and they were all climbing up the lampposts - trying to get a better view of everything!

I can just about remember feeling a bit lonely. With all those folks, how can you be lonely? You can though. You can be lonely in a crowd. But we all came through safe, so I mean we got through the bombing. I mean we used to home every holiday - into the blitz, down into the shelter. Knock-out. I mean my brother in law was killed at Dunkirk, so... We had our share, but, um.... It was a good war really, you know what I mean? I enjoyed it.

It's a strange thing to say, that.

Yeah, I enjoyed it - you did. Well, I think that people were... you were all in the same boat and everybody helped everybody and they were all... I don't know. And in the army – well, you were mates weren't you? And at school, we were all mates.

[<Files\HFRT007 June Woodward>](#) - § 1 reference coded [9.44% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 9.44% Coverage

Can you remember anything about the end of the war?

I can remember we didn't have to go to school and I think we just sort of wandered about up and down the streets. In the evening a lady who could play the piano, I remember she had her piano by the open window and we were sort of singing and playing about in the streets, but that's about it really.

Were there any parties?

Well not on the actual day, but I think later on in the year, streets organised parties, yes.

And do you remember those?

Well I can remember just going to one and sitting in the street, you know long trestle tables having food but after that I think I got a bit fed up and came home (laughing) and it was just for the children if I remember rightly.

But you were a child.

In St Mary's Street yes, no adults were there, it was in St Mary's street which was just round the corner from us, you know, two or three streets and then other ones all joined in.

[<Files\HFRT009 Eileen Denchfield>](#) - § 1 reference coded [4.25% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.25% Coverage

Tell me something about the end of the war?

We had parties, street parties.

This was all for the children was it?

Oh no, it was all ages the street party.

What did they do then, did they have food?

They had tables all down roads. The street lamps on.

Did they have any music?

Yes people would bring out a gramophone or something, you know.

So it was quite a high day?

Quite a day, yes.

[<Files\HFRT010 Betty Wise>](#) - § 1 reference coded [9.35% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 9.35% Coverage

Can you remember what happened when peace came?

People didn't get together in Wolverton and think 'oh hooray'. I know I was the office representative for the girls and they said we'd got to work on VE Day, I do remember, and the girls said, 'we're not going to do it.'

You were what?

The office representative for the girls in the Wages Office, the men had their own one.

Who did you represent the girls to?

To the Works Management, well, or to the Chief Accountant was it?. Well, the other offices they had it rough, but we'd had... well, as far as overtime, we'd come off worst. A lot of the offices didn't work overtime like we did. Don't know why I'm sure. It was during the war, the men did the overtime, so I expect that's why we did extra overtime. Anyway, the girls said they'd done all this extra time and the other offices were having a holiday for VE Day, and they weren't going to go in. It was all the offices that are burnt down now, where Tesco is, just by the railway – that was the main office. The men, they agreed (with us) and I had to say that the girls had said they weren't going to work. I just said that and left it at that. Well, anyway, they (the management) must have discussed it after we'd gone and they asked for volunteers from the other offices to come in. Because they (our girls) didn't come in, the girls didn't, they were determined not to come in, I don't know why they were so... Well, we had to work Boxing Day and things like that, when none of the other offices did, because it had got to be done, you see; the men had got to have their money each week, I suppose it is more essential than checking in supplies. But er... Anyway, one or two men came in. I didn't work a full day, I know, and there was another girl... Well, I just thought I might... Mr Stubbs, he was the chief one in our office, he came up and said, 'I didn't expect to see you' and I said 'well, I represented the girls so ...'.

So was it a special day that was declared, VE day, and it was a Bank Holiday, and you worked in the morning?

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Well, I worked until about 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock – my friend and I then got on the train and went to Northampton, but everyone was in the pubs so we didn't stop there, we just came back again – it was a bit flat as far as we were concerned. They had a VE Day party, but that was after the war.

Did you go to the VE day party?

Well yes, they did it in streets and I lived in Anson Road so I went to the one there.

So what happened at the street party?

Not a lot really because they hadn't got the foodstuff to put on a decent spread or anything like that. They just sang songs and talked, they had tables out. We had ours in the West End Chapel, that's where the Anson Road one was, but a lot had it in the streets.

[<Files\HFRT014 Diane Lillian Bowsher>](#) - § 1 reference coded [5.46% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 5.46% Coverage

Oh yes I remember, I was at school. That's yes I remember I was at school that's right at the senior school by this time and myself and two other girls got a message, the headmistress wanted us. We were going along, 'What we done

wrong, what we done wrong?' But it was to lay out all the chairs on the stage with her table and open the partition.

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It was girls and boys school but we never ever mixed, playground anywhere but we had a partition so all the boys came in and she said, 'Children I have wonderful news the war has finished!' I can remember I said to my mate, I was a swine at school, saying to my mate, 'Here look Miss is crying. I think you're supposed to cry, cry.' And all the girls are going whoooo! like that, because they were crying and we didn't know. She said, 'Right those children whose mothers are not at work may leave school, those mothers who are at work will remain at school until we finish at 4o'clock!' I bet you ninety-seven percent of kids made out their Mum was at home because we all went home!

[<Files\HFRT015 Janet Chamberlain>](#) - § 1 reference coded [3.75% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.75% Coverage

When you were five years old can you remember the end of the war?

Yes I can remember we had a V.E Day party in the street and they had tables all the way down the street and there were jelly and stuff. I don't think there was much of that sort of thing around in those days and I suppose we had paper hats and things like that and it was a very happy occasion it was actually my mothers birthday, that's one thing that I remember, it's not a lot,

[<Files\HFRT016 GladysBanks>](#) - § 1 reference coded [3.49% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.49% Coverage

So Gladys what about, um talking about the things you did during the war, what about the end of the war and VE Day, what can you remember about that?

50:09

Well I can remember, (I will just tell you about that, then I must go out to see if they want a cup of tea.) Well naturally I knew everything that was going on, though, so I planned em, not to go down to em Buckingham Palace because I knew that the Queen and Churchill would come out. I thought I would go to, I don't know why, I thought I would go to Trafalgar Square because I don't know, I seem attached to Trafalgar Square, always was even for a very large, very, very young, em child.

And when I got there, I mean I just left my work, my building in Whitehall and went up there and there were thousands of people there. And there was the bus route, they had changed the bus route, they changed it about three years ago now, because it had been made a pedestrian, Trafalgar Square, which is very good. And there was a bus with all these people jammed in on the top, because they were open-decked buses and up the stairway and I was there, like pushing me way and I, the bus was trying to move and I got on the board, what do you call it? Got on the board, the step of the bus and I was hanging on that bus cheering with everybody else and just stayed there, I can't tell you what the atmosphere was like, was, I just can't tell you.

[<Files\HFRT017 Mary Webb>](#) - § 1 reference coded [4.47% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.47% Coverage

End of the war, any abiding memory of the end of the war?

Not really except we were allowed out late at night on the end of the war which we had never been before, I mean we used to have to be in for a certain time. But the day the war finished we were allowed out around the town to sort of celebrate you know.

And what happened?

Well you know only just sort of really walked around, I mean we didn't sort of drink at all you know much, but the Scouts and Guides, we used to have the Scouts and Guide club you know and we went round with the Scouts and Guides, yeah.

[<Files\HFRT018 Lena Jakeman>](#) - § 1 reference coded [3.32% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.32% Coverage

OK the end of the War any particular memories of V.E day?

No only just that, no I don't remember I was just at work and that was it.

I mean we worked that was it I mean your all exited and thrilled that it was over thank God but I mean it didn't make, and we all had a party after wards, street party didn't we, we had street party

Like Glynn Square had it's own party or was there ones for several street together or what?

No it's just a town thing more than anything wasn't it the party more of a town thing. I don't remember a lot about it but I mean we had parties and things, celebrations and that sort of thing, yes

[<Files\HFRT019 Audrey Lambert>](#) - § 1 reference coded [2.63% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.63% Coverage

End of war can you remember, did you hear that on the radio?

I don't know because I was over at my aunts, she did have a radio, yes she definitely had all I can remember is the village had arranged to go outside and everybody was dancing. What the music was I've no idea, I can't remember but there certainly was dancing in the streets.

Was this just children?

No this was everybody, the whole village turned out.

Was there any decorations and things?

No I don't remember that.

[<Files\SHLT038 Phyllis Brocklehurst>](#) - § 3 references coded [11.58% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 9.15% Coverage

Now then we come on to the last scene, umm, first of all have you got any recollection at all of either VE Day or VJ Day?

Yeah. VE Day, do you know? We had to work. We had to stay in the Works offices because of it being the wages. The wages had got to be out. I mean, you know, OK it's, you know I mean, no computers, no nothing just calculating machines and your head and your fingers umm, and they lined up outside the Works offices. There was the great band and all the rest of it and I can

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remember we're in a sort of bardy(?) went down, work, you know work people, we sort of said we're not going to miss out on everything and umm, very trivial....

VE Day, to be honest, in the papers doesn't get a huge amount of coverage. The one that seemed to really, where things went a bit wild the next day and people had time off work was VJ Day in August.

Yeah, because VE Day was a bit of an anti-climax really and truly. Now, is that the right word? No, a lot of people and my family in particular because we had a brother, my brother was in a prisoner of War in the Far East. To us, VE was only part of it. We were very conscious that we'd got that other enemy and we'd got to get those people back. And also, I think when people started off, when the second front started we'd got this tremendous build up of Americans in this country. Everybody had said we're not going in until we're prepared because you know Russia kept saying start the second front, start the second front, pressure, pressure, pressure. People over here were saying we're not going to go in until we're really, really can squeak through and I think that the man in the street reckoned when we started the second front it would be a much easier operation. You know we'd literally go forward and just continue. We'd sweep through hopefully a bit the way Hitler had swept through the Lowlands and the rest of it and pushed us out to Dunkirk. But of course, it wasn't like that. We had some pretty ghastly battles, some, some terrible losses in that, in those months that it took. Ultimately victory was declared but it had been at such a cost that a lot of people weren't exactly throwing their hats in the air. It was relief, tremendous relief that, OK that's finished, the slaughter is over, the people can come back. But there's all this business in the Far East.

And of course the Japs were fighting terribly. When the Japs first came in people, I think people thought oh these little yellow men. People didn't know what they were made of but by this time in the War, people did know what they were made of. They knew they'd fight to the last man. They knew what fanatics they were. I mean, no other nation sent people out in those planes where the man literally aimed himself and his plane at the target. I mean, you've got to be absolutely fanatical for that and they'd, they'd fight to the last ditch, wouldn't they? They were a different category from the other people who, if you like have got a bit more sense. The other people were not so indoctrinated but the Japs obviously were totally indoctrinated to fight to this ultimate end.

So umm, OK so people were, as I say tremendous relief, people very glad that the European thing was over. That our prisoners of War would be freed and no more slaughter, in that way but very conscious of the fact that we were by no means finished in the Far East. And goodness only knows what we were going to find out there. And God only knows how long it would take to polish off these fanatics who were well and truly dug in and quite crazy. And I personally think that we were justified in dropping the A bomb... I'm not sure about the second one, I would say the first certainly, because I think the Japs had absolutely got to have a demonstration that we had got something quite terrible and we were prepared to use it. I think they would've gone on and on. God knows when that ever would have finished and I think possibly too, it was necessary to demonstrate to the World what a horrific weapon was now available to mankind. What's gone on since I don't agree with. The proliferation and all the rest of it and of course, once you get the weapon like that and once you use it once, umm, you can argue all sorts of things. But at that time the Japs were so entrenched that the slaughter to get them out,

really would've been quite frightful. Umm, but I think, as I say, my family got this feeling because, because of having a brother out there. Our feeling was muted, but that probably wasn't the general run of things for everybody but again everybody was conscious that this wasn't the end of it we'd still got...

Do you actually get news from them at all? When it's...

No.

None at all? For how long?

Ooh when, when they, Singapore fell in February '42. And we didn't get a single thing, my brother was married so the card when it came, came to his wife. And he'd written it a very few weeks after Singapore fell and it was eighteen months later, that it was, I'm pretty sure it was eighteen months later when it was delivered to her. Well of course anything could've happened in that time so it wasn't really worth the paper it was written on.

Reference 2 - 0.75% Coverage

So you can't remember any you know, taking part in anything like street parties? Or anything like that?

Oh yes. We all, yeah, we all got involved in street parties and that was tremendous because err, you know people were getting pretty short of everything by this time in the War. But people made things and gave things. All right we all went and we all joined in, but it, it was good and, and that was a lovely warm...

Reference 3 - 1.69% Coverage

Well we've got some stuff I just wondered if you had any particular recalls of anything that, that happened at a street party you went to.

I tell you what was so funny – just the fact that because Wolverton people don't live in the streets, they live in their own houses. They don't sit on their own doorsteps talking to the people next door, or whatever. You see you do tend to find that on a fine summer evening if you go down Bradwell. But the Wolverton people didn't. But this time right out they went into the streets and they sort of put tables up the, up the, up the middle. And kind of everybody joined in and, oh I suppose we played games, and the kids did races and things like that. And umm, it wasn't anything that remarkable really, but it was just a tremendous sense of comradeship and goodwill. This is my over riding feeling that, that people were happy and there was this tremendous feeling of good will and they wanted everybody to join in.