

Interviewee: Kathleen Eames

Interviewer: Malin Lundin

Date: 05.11.2010

Interviewer: This is an interview with Kathleen Eames and the date is the 5th of November 2010 and the interviewer is Malin Lundin. Would you be able to tell me your date of birth first of all please?

Kathleen: Yes. May 1924.

Interviewer: Ok, how old were you when the war started then?

Kathleen: Fifteen.

Interviewer: Fifteen. Ok, where were you living at this point?

Kathleen: Farnborough Village, when Farnborough was a proper village. The village that size. The sprawling mass these days.

Interviewer: And who were you living with?

Kathleen: My parents, my older brother, my sister and I have a younger sister. And my grandfather also lived with us but he died about October thirty-nine.

Interviewer: Can you remember the first day of the war? When war broke out on the 3rd of September?

Kathleen: I can remember my mother was slicing runner beans when the announcement came over the wireless set and she started crying because during the First World War two — one of her brothers had been killed and the other one badly injured and she was thinking about her son what would happen. My grandfather died a few weeks later and she was pleased that he had died before he realised that there was another war.

Interviewer: Ok, do you remember how you felt when you heard the news?

Kathleen: Well, not really. I was a bit — I was a bit, I suppose, apprehensive. Nothing much happened and just one young man from the village, that I knew, he was in the Territorials, he had gone to France so he would — he would have died either the end of '39 or beginning of 1940. I do remember 1940, it was a brilliant summer, blue sky, sunshine and Spitfires would come up from Biggin Hill, because we are near Biggin Hill here, and then we'd wait for the air raid warning to go and we'd watch them fight in the sky overhead. It was — to me it was quite exciting really. They were brave young men and it wasn't just the English boys, I mean, there were Polish, free French and there were some from New Zealand and South

Africa. There was one [unclear], he was South African and he was one of the ace pilots from Biggin Hill. We'd stand out and watch the fighting and it always seemed to be over the village of Cudham that German bomber exploded and we'd watched the parachutes come out. Yes, it was — it was one of the last beautiful summers we had, when we and the young Frenchmen, we had strawberries and cream. It was lovely.

Interviewer: Can you tell me a bit about that? When the Frenchmen came?

Kathleen: Pardon?

Interviewer: Can you tell me a bit about that when the Frenchmen came to see you?

Kathleen: Yes, a neighbour of ours, she was one of the nurses from the hospital, she got to know and she said to my mum, 'Oh, we can invite the walking wounded out one Sunday', so mum said, 'Well, yes you can bring some down'. So as I say we had a slightly larger garden than some people. We had a lawn. We did know who was going to arrive so we went out and bought strawberries and she came with the two French boys and there was an English soldier and another nurse. There was quite a crowd of us. We sat down on the lawn and we — they didn't speak English, we didn't speak French but we didn't sort — we didn't think about that sort of thing. We just tucked in to strawberries and cream and we showed them how to play shove ha'penny (??) which they enjoyed. Yes, they were nice, very nice young men. To me it was, you know, great fun and then¹ later when I look at those photographs and I think, those poor young men, what it must have been for them their own country occupied. They would have been worrying what had happened to their families. We didn't know where they went to and of course we couldn't exchange names and addresses because of the language barrier. We'd, you know, often think, well, we hope we made that afternoon enjoyable for them and memorable. Yes, they were nice young men. As I say, one was slightly wounded and the other one, I think he'd been in the sea for a long time and swallowed a bit of oil and water and — but otherwise he wasn't physically hurt but mentally one wonders.

Interviewer: Did you have many other wounded soldiers that came to the village?

Kathleen: That was the only ones we had. Because Farnborough Hospital it was an old hospital. It had at one time been a workhouse, that there was a chapel there, a workhouse chapel. So it was full of wounded soldiers and Orpington Hospital, in Orpington, which belonged to the Canadians, and the wounded Canadians lived there. They used — we used to see them walking around. They used to wear bright blue suits, white shirts and red ties. So it became a proper military — a military hospital. A cousin of my was — oh, she worked in the kitchen there. In fact one of the dogs our family owned came from there. She said, 'We get a lot of stray dogs in kitchen' so she said, 'Do you want one?' and my mum said, 'Yes,

¹ 5 min

we'll have one of the dogs' and we did. But, of course, it was all huts and what happened to the soldiers, I guess, they must just have stayed there really. I don't really know. We didn't go round that way very much, only perhaps on a bus.

Interviewer: So you were fifteen when the war started.

Kathleen: Yes.

Interviewer: Were you still in school or were you working at this stage?

Kathleen: I was still at school which really upset the end of schooling because they — some schools closed. Some opened and some were closed perhaps for a couple of days and then opened again. They didn't quite know what to do because of the possibility of air raids but at that time we weren't getting daylight raids. The Battle of Britain, the German planes were really interested in — German planes were really interested in getting to London and they would fly over Farnborough. So I left school when I was sixteen and went to work in Orpington, my eldest sister — cos she — most of the time she lived with an aunt in London in a boarding house and she worked there, she worked in a milliners. Of course, that closed as the war started so she came home and at the time she was working in Woolworths in Orpington so one morning we were walking down Dubbindon Lane, because it was a very quiet little lane, no foot paths, just two or three gas lamps. It's so different — well, it's still a small lane but of course they've added foot paths to it and then it wasn't. It was just quiet little lane, quiet little country lane and we were walking down one morning and there was planes fighting overhead and we had to suddenly dive in to a hedge cos the bullets — it was all — to me it was still all quite exciting [laughs]. But then of course, I had no idea then that it was going to last² six long years. I think the worst thing about the war, I mean, one got used to the rationing, was the blackout. I mean, when you think there were no lights anywhere. Shops, public houses, they had to have special doors put in so as you went in another one closed and open so it didn't shine any light at all.

Interviewer: So what did you find difficult with the blackout? What was the worst part of it?

Kathleen: Well, you could — you could have a torch which you had to be very careful not to wave it about. I suppose, I didn't go out much at night. My sister home from London, a Saturday afternoon we would go to the pictures, so we didn't actually go out at night. It was — being in the village, it was just a small village, there was the parish room and I think they held dances but I didn't go to that but —. I wasn't old enough to go in to a pub for a drink. They were very strict then and the pubs were just for drinking, they didn't have food. You wouldn't go in there to have a meal not like today, that's what you go in for, really, to have a meal and a drink. And the new Georgian Dragon in Farnborough — in Farnborough Village I can

² 10 min

remember that being built. The old one there was a very scruffy and so they built the new one and to keep the license they have to build it new one while the old one is still there so they did that and —. Oh, it was later when I was old enough to go in there — beautiful place, lovely saloon, lounge, games rooms, snooker table and dance and very comfortable saloon lounge. It was — we used to go there meet friends and have a game of darts, it was great.

Interviewer: So what kind of work did you do?

Kathleen: Well, I started off as a receptionist at a [unclear]. I didn't stay there very long. I went on and I worked in an office along St. Mary Cray Avenue. It was a firm that had moved in from Slough, it was a — firms to do with radios, I can't remember the name, I stayed there for a time. In Bromley there was an Optician there, Albert Harris, and my brother as it happened to be he worked in the workshop but they wanted someone else in the office so I went along and got the job so I worked in the office. Later on I moved from the office and — the lady who was in charge of the office, quite a mature lady, and I think she was worried that I might take her job. She was always sending me in to the next door room, which was the stockroom, 'Go in there and help Stella'. I had a small telephone exchange so I knew more about stockroom work than I did office work and when Stella was leaving, I went to see Mr Harris. He said just, 'Right, you can take over'. I knew everyone there so, I guess it was, — and of course at that time, cos they did make a lot of their own things at Harris's, they made the frame, they made some of the lenses and, of course, we used to buy a lot of lenses they wanted from London and the East End of London and, of course, that had been badly bombed. In fact there was one firm, Alfred Mills, they moved out to Runnymede³. But I could ring them up and ask them if they got certain lenses and could we have so many? No, we could only let you have one pair. I understand from people that have worked back in the thirties that they could put the lenses on the train in London and we'd collect them at Bromley South Station but — yes, it was good working there. But there were all these restrictions then. And getting the buses, I'd get a bus out, there was a bus stop quite near where I worked so I could take that in to Farnborough Village, the 47 bus. Farnborough was a small, very small village.

Interviewer: You were saying that there were some restrictions. What kind of restrictions would that be?

Kathleen: Restrictions on what?

Interviewer: You mentioned earlier that there were some restrictions.

Kathleen: Yes, restrictions on — of course, it went on quite long after the war what one could do. As well as the rationing, let's see.

Interviewer: Was it to do what you were allowed to order at work and the kind of work that you did at the

³ 15 min

Opticians or?

[Pause]

Interviewer: Were you ever called up to do war work? Were you conscripted in to?

Kathleen: Oh, yeah. I didn't want to — I didn't want to work in a factory because there was a factory in Farnborough Village, British Engineering. My eldest sister went to work there, she was naturally left handed but when, at the time when she was going to school, she was made to use her right hand and that affected her much of her life and she went to work in this factory. I don't know what she had to do but she said to the foreman, she said, 'I'm going to leave', she said, 'I'm ruining more things because', he said, 'Well, you can't do that', she said, 'Well, I am going to leave', she said, 'There's all that stuff gets thrown in the waste bin', and she said, 'I just can't do any better. I can't grasp the mechanics of it'. So there were two laundries in Farnborough Village, The Limes Laundry, and there must have been a lot of Americans based nearby. I don't remember seeing any but the Limes Laundry was doing the laundry for the American soldiers so that was considered war work. So she went to work there and that was ok, she could manage that fine.

But as I said, I went to work at Harris's in Bromley. I joined the WRNS. I didn't want to go in to a factory and I wouldn't have minded going in the WAAF but they didn't want it. They were full up so I went in the WRNS and I had to go up to London and volunteer for that. So that's what I did, so I was sent to — I was sent up to Scotland at first for the first few weeks and you're there — you're in the WRNS — you're in there for six weeks I think, six weeks, and if you want to go home well then you can do, no questions asked you just go. I thought, no, I'm not doing that, admitting that I'm not liking it. So I stayed and, oh, it was cold up there. They used to teach us Highland dancing, I think, to keep us warm [laughs]. Then we came back — came back down south.⁴ Then I went to New Haven, in Sussex, although we were actually living — we lived in Seaford. New Haven was just down the road, it was a port and there was a big hotel there, London Paris Hotel. We went to work there; I was a — an Officer's — was I? Yes, I was a — I forget now what we were called, anyway we looked after the officers. They had other people doing cleaning and it was quite good. Leave — at the time I joined up, which was when they were beginning to plan for D-Day, that was in 1943, I did get home for Christmas but after that we were only allowed to travel within a ten mile radius of New Haven. All our letters were censored and — we — of course, that was the build-up, that's why there's all these soldiers, a lot of Canadian soldier. Canadians were always having parties, they occupied all the big hotels along the front of Seaford and they would send a big lorry up to Seaford House, that's where the Wrens lived, 'We're having a party, do you want to come?' and they'd whisk us off down there and we'd dance and drink and smoke. Which, of course, at that time nobody realised the dangers of smoking but it was — I did smoke a bit but no more than about four-five

cigarettes a day. I couldn't smoke in the morning, it's one of those social things, someone would hand around cigarettes so you'd feel, 'Oh, I better buy a packet of cigarettes', so you could hand them out. So that's what we did and that's how I started but as I said, I couldn't smoke in the morning. My older brother did, he used to stand in the kitchen in Farnborough hanging on to the mantelpiece coughing his head off. My mother saying to him, 'Put that cigarette out!' but he didn't. As I say, I could smoke late afternoon and evening. If we were having a drink, I'd have a cigarette, it seemed to go together. I stopped smoking when I had a bad attack of tonsillitis and I gave up. Of course at that time prices of cigarettes was going up, up. That's why I didn't take any more on and I'm jolly glad I didn't.

Interviewer: Did you enjoy your time in the WRNS?

Kathleen: Yes, it was great fun. You meet all sorts of people. There was a girl there, Katherine, Katherine Mcquaid, I think she was from Glasgow and she had a weekend coming up and she couldn't go home, you see, so I said to her, 'Come home with me. We can fit you in' and so she did. Yeah, she's a nice little girl.

Interviewer: So what kinds of duties were involved in looking after the officers then?

Kathleen: Well, you waited at them at table and kept their rooms tidy, the actual cleaning was done by other Wrens but we made sure their beds were tidy, rooms were tidy. It wasn't too difficult work. I would have liked to have done something else. If I would have thought, as I'd worked in a stockroom I could have joined the supply section and I could have done that and I thought, well, if I do I got have to start all over again and they would send me elsewhere. That means you got to start making new friends so I thought, oh, I think I'll stay and stay as I am.

Interviewer: What — what was the best part of what you were doing?

Kathleen: [Pause]⁵ Well, I suppose, it was the, yes, it was looking after the young officers because, you know, it was a wartime base and they had the MTBs, Motor Torpedo Boats, go out at night to torpedo and up in to the Channel. So we knew that looking after them was a worthwhile job, those young men. [Pause] Yes, they were — I remember one he was from South Devon, he was a farmer. He had lovely rosy cheeks. Blond hair, rosy cheeks. I think he was killed later but it was — yes, we used to say, 'Well, we are doing a worthwhile job. We're giving them — we're looking after them and give them comfort'. Cos it must have been pretty rough, going out to the Channel every night. The Germans had their E-boats.

So when VE-day was declared that base was shut down straight away. It's a wartime base, no need for it anymore and we were all moved down to Portsmouth which was strictly RN. My goodness me, as it

⁴ 20 min

⁵ 25min

changed. You knew you were in the Navy then. It was all in naval terms, you see. Floor became deck and all these other names they used, I can't think of them all now. But — and we were — the Wrens were taken out for drilling [laughs]. I didn't think much of the Wrens drilling. Women can't swing their arms properly [laughs]. And they'd have sunset, this is when the flag is lowered and no matter where you are on that base when you hear the beucal sound you stand to attention and then when it's finished you can then move away. That was sunset, very impressive really. We were at Wyle Island, which is a gunnery school. It was just joined the mainland by the bridge. The men who were there, the Gunnery Instructors, my goodness me, were very, very strict, made sure we were walking properly, marching properly.

Interviewer: How long did you stay in Portsmouth?

Kathleen: Oh, until — until VJ-Day and then — it was just those few months. [Pause] I know the atom bombs were terrible things but that was the only thing that stopped the Japanese. The Japanese were a very cruel race, very cruel and to them it was an honour to die for your country, that's why they treated their prisoners so atrociously. My late husband he was in the Army, he was in the Field Ambulance and he was attached to a Highland division, he was in the war for six years and they came when — VE-Day happened they said, 'Ah, good! We should be demobbed'. No, they were sent back to England, they were going to do more training and they were gonna send them out⁶ to the Far East. So they were one group of people who were very pleased when the atom bomb was dropped because that was the only thing that would stop the Japanese. I know the Japanese these days are different people. I know one young lady who lives around here, a charming lady. I've met her mum but at that time the Japanese were very cruel people.

Interviewer: Did your husband ever talk about his war experience with you?

Kathleen: Only the funny things. He was at El-Alamein and he was at the landing, Sicily Landings and then came back to England to get ready for D-Day, he went over on D-Day plus one. No, they never talk about the awful things happening. They must have seen some awful sights being in the Field Ambulance but he never spoke of it. He made good friends attached to the Highland Division, they were all from different walks from life but there was a group of them they tried to meet once a year because they'd been so a lot together and that formed a firm friendship. Possibly if they'd met in other circumstances they wouldn't have been joined up at all but they used to try to meet once a year, often it was Edinburgh. We would try to make, perhaps, a week's holiday in Scotland so he could go off to his reunion and I would do my thing cos it was just for the men. Someone said to me, 'Aren't you wives going along?', and I said, 'We have nothing in common', I said, 'The men have lots to talk about', I said, 'It's up to them to get along with their talk, they don't want their wives hovering around' [laughs]. So, yes, we'd have a week's holiday,

⁶ 30 min

perhaps in Edinburg or Perth. But yes, there were some good friends among them, Elgin. And they all — when they sent him a Christmas card it always used to have the HD, Highland Division somewhere in it. HD. But they don't talk about the awful things, just all the funny instances. My husband said — well, they were going — he crossed the — he said, 'I crossed the Rhine in a boat', he said, 'I've got a lantern and a notebook and pencil' [laughs].

Interviewer: Have you ever been to any reunions? With the WRNS?

Kathleen: No. Oh, the WRNS, no. I think there was something going to be organised in Bromley but I was — I'd got the flu so I didn't go and I didn't keep contact. I suppose in some ways because — yes, I suppose, cos I was working in Bromley, I suppose, I could have stayed on after work and have a meal and then gone, I didn't. I used to come home so I didn't. I didn't go along at all.

Interviewer: So when you left Portsmouth did you go back to stay with your family again in Farnborough?

Kathleen: Oh, yes. Yes. Well, people did in those days, you didn't think about setting place of your own. So you went back to your family. You stayed there really until, I mean, I suppose I was older than a lot of girls when I got married. I was nearly thirty before I got married so I didn't leave home until then.

Interviewer: How — did you find a job after you came back from Portsmouth?

Kathleen: Oh, yes. I went back to Harris's. They said, 'Oh, yes. You got your job back' and I went back to working in the stockroom. And of course Bromley had been very, very badly bombed. It seemed to be pubs and churches in Bromley that were bombed⁷. And the Gaumont Cinema, it's not there now, I can remember the Gaumont Cinema being built then. It's been a shop now for years now. I forget who runs the shop now cos it's only the one. The Odeon Cinema still in Bromley but that was the other cinema, the Odeon. Of course, going to the pictures in those days was a real treat. You could go in anytime, you didn't have to book in advance or anything like that. There were always two films, you'd get the News Reel and you'd get a cartoon, perhaps Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck. It was great, it was great fun. There were haze of smoke [laughs], everybody smoked.

Interviewer: Did you have any air raids in Farnborough?

Kathleen: Well, everything flew over Farnborough. There was one — one occasion — one Sunday when a bomb was dropped on what is now the A21 which we always called the New Road. It was the A21 and I think it hit — there was a family in the end of Orchard Road, which is where the bomb dropped, the family had gone in their air raid shelter and it hit their air raid shelter and it also damaged part of the road. There was a big piece of curb that was flung up and landed in a garden in Glaston Road. But that was the

⁷ 35 min

only one. I think we probably — the fields around probably got bombs dropped in them. Down Golf course, cos being near Biggin Hill, they were always waiting for that. They did — they did hit, although we didn't realise it at the time that they hit Biggin Hill, which you could walk up there Hyams Lane. It was so easy in those days, there was very little traffic. You could walk up Hyams Lane, that would lead you down back again and Northend, lovely. Quiet little lanes, Char Lane. They've put foot paths either side of the hedge now. You could amble along Char Lane, quiet little lane, which of course was built in the days of horse and carts, you see, it wasn't meant for traffic belting along there.

Interviewer: Did you have an air raid shelter in your garden?

Kathleen: No, my father would not have an air raid shelter but we had a big cupboard under the stairs. We also had a very stout mahogany table, quite a big one so we use to — you either sat in the cupboard or under the table. But in time you got used to the drone of the enemy aircraft, you'd go upstairs and lay in bed and along the A21, lorries would be there at night, some with search lights, some with guns and we used to go upstairs and lay in bed listen to drone from the German aircraft.

Interviewer: Do you know why your father didn't want an air raid shelter?

Kathleen: No, I don't know why he wouldn't have one. No, his attitude was that we're going to be alright, he didn't want to have an air raid shelter⁸.

Interviewer: How did you feel about that?

Kathleen: I don't suppose I — I don't really know. I don't —. My father was a very domineering person so you did as he wanted. But as I say, we did have the cupboard under the stairs and we had a good stout table and we were ok.

Interviewer: So what kind of training did you receive when you went up to Scotland when you joined the WRNS?

Kathleen: I don't remember much in the way of training. I know that they used to teach us Highland dancing. We used to — we used to walk to one place and I can remember people saying that the hills of Scotland looked purple in the moonlight and they really do because at that time it was a full moon and we used to walk along these lanes and the hills really did look purple. It was — I don't remember actually doing any training except that they were teaching us dancing, we used to learn the ancient (??) reel. I remember that one, it seemed to go on forever but I don't remember learning anything else [laughs].

Interviewer: Did think that the experiences that you had during the war that that changed you as a person

⁸ 40 min

at all?

Kathleen: In what way do you mean?

Interviewer: So being – being a Wren and working with the officers in the Navy and leaving home for the war work.

Kathleen: Leaving home was quite – I didn't mind leaving home actually. It was so nice to get away and not having mum and dad breathing down my neck. And I was old enough at that time to go in to a pub and have a drink. My father didn't drink but my mum enjoyed a glass of Guinness and my brother enjoyed a drink because they were older than me anyway and my older sister she did used to – she used to puzzle me – she used to talk about having a 'Gin & It' and of course I used to think, what is 'It'? 'It', of course, was Italian Vermouth which I didn't know about [laughs]. But at the time the drink was 'gin and orange' or 'gin and lime'. But I felt quite rebellious in a way going in to a pub, I could write to home and say, 'I've been to a pub and had a drink' [laughs]. But I think once my father saw that we could enjoy a drink and not be silly he was ok because he – his memories went back to when he was at work, on a Friday night, men were paid on a Friday night, and their wives would be waiting there to get some money before their husbands went off to the pub and drank it all. That was what was in his mind and that was why he didn't drink. So when he realised that we could handle a drink he didn't mind at all.

Interviewer: But you used to go out to dances with the soldiers? Were they Canadian soldiers you say?

Kathleen: Oh yes, Canadian soldiers. There was every so lot Canadians in Seaford, they were all waiting for D-Day. There were a lot of – I was making my daughter laugh the other day, I said 'There were the commandos', I said, 'They would come to dances wearing their boots' [laughs]. But they were all there waiting for D-Day, the Canadians were great, always having parties and they used to come whizzing round, 'We're having a party'. So we used to dance and drink, we had a smoke.

Interviewer: Did they treat you well?

Kathleen: Hmm?

Interviewer: Did they treat you well? The soldiers?

Kathleen: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. They were very good, very kind. Oh, yes, there was no rough stuff, nothing like that. They didn't expect you to go and sleep with them, they just didn't. Yes, they were nice⁹ – nice young men. Some they – we had some rough ones in Bromley for a time. They were from Saskatchewan, which I understand is a bit of a rough and ready place in Canada and all the shops in Bromley had extra

⁹ 45 min

gates put up on their fronts and their windows were covered because the way these young men behaved using the entrance as a lavatory sometimes. So – but I didn't see any of that. I mean, that happened at night and we weren't there. That was the reason why they had the extra gates put in.

Interviewer: How was it returning back home after having had that kind of newfound freedom being away?

Kathleen: Yes, it was – it was ok. I think I'd grown up a lot and become more responsible and cos I still had to help about the house. One did, you didn't go off and do your own thing. You helped your mum. I mean, she didn't teach me to cook, when things are rationed they can't – messing around with food. I didn't really learn to cook, not until I got married. And so it was ok, it was cos my dad had an allotment so we used to – we were all expected to lend a hand on the allotment. Yes, that was [unclear] the allotment. There was – as I say, at that time Farnborough was a nice little village, you know, that big. It was a lovely allotment field where – right down there you got lovely mushrooms and we had snow, it was great. We had snowball fights and sledging down slopes, it was great. We had some lovely shops there, it's difficult for people now to visualize what Farnborough was like. I've got to give a talk in about a couple of weeks time up my local church, Reverend Alison, it's on Remembrance Day, she asked me the other week if I would give a talk. I said, 'Yes, I'm quite prepared to do that but I must have someone to take me up there and bring me back'. I can't do the hills so she said her son will look after me so I know what I'm going to say. I was saying to my daughter the other day, I've got – I want to get to people's minds that Farnborough was a small, a very small village, you know, that big. It's a sprawling mass of houses now not the lovely little village I grew up in. Yes, it was – it was great. Coming back was no – coming back was no problem really. Things were still rationed, rationed for a long time.

Interviewer: How would you summarize your wartime experience?

Kathleen: How would I summarize them? [Pause] Yes, it's difficult that. I suppose the war changes so many things, so many things. You can't keep harking back to what it was like in the thirties, it's like – well, it is two entirely different situations. I don't go back now, I did at one time, I used to think, so and so did so and so but then you got six years, it's a long time and it changes – changes things so much. People was – back in the thirties people didn't have telephones in their home, it's hard to imagine these days isn't it? That people exist, they wouldn't, and, I mean, people¹⁰ round here are friendly but back then people were – you knew everyone. Being in a small village you knew the neighbours, you knew the shopkeepers. Shopkeepers were good and Mr Kearn, the grocer, he had – he used to have a sign up, 'You may telephone from here' and how the war years changed. Of course it takes time – it takes time to get back, six years is a big slice. And as I say, things were rationed quite a few years after the war ended. At one time the local butcher in Farnborough slaughtered his own animals and of course that all stopped. And

¹⁰ 50 min

the people in the shops, they all lived above the shops which of course they don't. And families worked together then as the butcher, his sons all worked in the business. They all kept together. Of course the war years that stops – stopped that in a way. People move away and they get an idea of what it's like not being back at home so they want to, I suppose, spread their wings a bit, although, of course, you had to save to get all these things. We'd don't live on credit as they do these days.

Interviewer: Did you have any desire of leaving home?

Kathleen: Hmm?

Interviewer: Did you have any desire of leaving home after having been in the WRNS?

Kathleen: No. No, it was nice being back home and being looked after cos mums didn't go out to work so mum was always there. When I came in from work there was always a hot meal ready and of course there was no washing machine so she had to do washing and that was hard work too. I might help out with the ironing, she didn't have an electric iron at that time either, that was the flat iron. No, I wouldn't want to get back to those days, things are much, in many ways these days, things are much easier all round.

Interviewer: I don't have any more questions now, is there anything that you to talk about that you feel like you haven't had the chance to do?

Kathleen: Oh, yes, I've got the book. Thank you very much for that. That book – very nice.

Interviewer: I'm going to –

End of Interview.