

Letter written by Margaret Strong

I was born on the 26th July 1926 in Greenwich where I have lived most of my life.

I was 13 when the war started, my school closed in 1939 and at age 13 that (was) the end of my schooling. I witnessed the Battle of Britain and saw German bombers coming up the Thames. I lived in Harely Cottages next to the Power Station by the river. I remember walking across Blackheath and seeing soldiers camped there and barrage balloons overhead.

I was evacuated to Wales with my mother who was partially sighted. I worked as a nurse maid to Lord Gibson-Watts.

I returned to Greenwich in 1942 to find that my house had been bombed and totally destroyed a year earlier. My mother, father and myself stayed in 2 rooms in a large house in Gloucester Circus. At this time there were many more bombings and we spent many nights in the air raid shelter in the garden.

I worked in the Charlton Rope Factory amongst the many rats. I hated it but I had no choice, it was for the war effort. I met my future husband at the rope factory and we were married for 56 years.

I had a very narrow escape when I was almost hit by a V2 rocket on Blackheath Hill (you could hear the V1 Doodlebugs but not the V2s). It destroyed several houses and left a large hole in the road.

I was married in 1946 in St Alfeges Church which was bombed a few years earlier. I had to borrow my wedding dress and the bridesmaid dresses.

I still remember rationing and would later tell my children to eat up their dinners saying "you wouldn't get that in the war – we only had one egg a week".