

New Forest Remembers WWII Project

Oral History Team: Transcription Document

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First of all, could you tell me your name and when and where you were born?

My name's Brian David Gittoes and I was born on the 10th May 1934 in Lymington.

Thank you. What were you doing when war broke out?

I started school in 1939 in the summer so war started within about four weeks of me starting school. And then it was The Battle of Britain and in the air raid shelters, lessons in the air raid shelters.

Oh! You had lessons in the air raid shelters?

Of a type, it was very difficult for the teachers because sometimes the 'all clear' would go and we would be on our way back to school, from the air raid, from the shelters, and the siren would go and we'd have to go back. I think that was during The Battle of Britain because there was a lot of activity, air activity, there was a lot of activity in the area and over the Isle of Wight and we were, you know, I think the teachers did a very good job considering we spent several, quite a few years going into the air raid shelters, all of us. It must have interrupted our lessons, our schooling but, it's amazing really that we got through it and we learnt to read, write and do maths.

Could you just tell me which school you went to?

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CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

Yes, it was the National School, or Church of England school, which is now the museum in Lymington.

So where was the air raid shelter? Was it in the grounds?

No, just higher up near the churchyard which is now, it's now, it's now got a children's play area and it's grassed, it's grassed over and the walkway, there's a walkway which goes from the back of the town hall through to the high street, through the churchyard and the, this green area, there was about four or five air raid shelters for the school children and it was about, about three or four minutes walk (march) from the school and it was very basic and you know the, and in the winter it wasn't very pleasant.

So how many children would fit into each air raid shelter?

Well, usually it would be a class, and the class would be about thirty and it was very basic and oil lamps in there and teachers, like I say, teachers did a really good job because, interrupting, the sirens would interrupt lessons and we'd go through, but of course, when you're school children, the war was quite exciting because you don't know any better, you don't know, you don't even realise the dangers.

So, the sirens would go and you'd have to pick up your bags and traipse off, and did that happen once a day, more than once a day?

Some days, some days, you could have one day of maybe in a week that you didn't have to go to the air raid shelters but it would be most days and some days, you could be two, three or even four times, you'd have to leave the school depending on the activity, you know, if the German 'planes came over, the sirens went and sometimes, the siren went and then they disappeared and you would be just leaving the school and the 'all clear' would go!

00:04.19

- School life in wartime
- Interruptions due to air raids

And what was in the air raid shelter?

There was seats, like wooden seats, wooden seats, a toilet, a very basic toilet, and if a bomb dropped in the main entrance of them got blocked, there was an escape hatch with a vertical wooden ladder at the other end, which luckily never happened, I think, I think the escape hatch saved some people's lives in the city but the bombing was much worse. But we weren't, we weren't scared because of being young, it must have been a very trying time for teachers and parents, adults in general.

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Did you have any evacuees at the school?

We had evacuees, we had evacuees that came, I think it would be they came down mainly from London and we also had an orphanage, they came in sailor suits and we had evacuees and they were housed around the area, my Grandmother had two, she lived in Bath Road and she was a widow, she had two children from London, 'cause we used to play with them and I think they all, they all went back to London when the bombing eased, they went back about 1944. I think they, they went back up 'cause they weren't very happy being away from their parents and I think they met them at the railway station, they had labels on with their names, poor children but we played with them and I suppose it was nice to be fairly safe down here. Although there was quite a bit of action at times, and night time raids and, and sometimes it would be, bombs were dropped by aircraft, maybe shying away from the big cities and they'd be on the way back to France and they'd be dropping around here and especially incendiaries, found a lot of them, we'd take the fins off, unscrew the fins for souvenirs, off the incendiary bombs, they were all stuck in the ground, burnt out.

- What was inside the shelters
- Evacuees at the school

What else did you go scavenging for?

We went, well, we used to scavenge for, like I say ammunition, parts off aircraft, bullet proof glass was quite, it was quite popular because we could, people were quite ingenious, some children, they would file them down and use emery paper and make them into rings and things and use iodine to stain them and things. And they do, there was swapping at school, with what we'd cadged or got from crashes, we had some things, too much of one thing and then we'd swap it at school with other children that had got other things. And we had a, from a German 'plane, it came down near the council refuse dump at Lymington, it crashed in daytime, German bomber and all the crew were killed and we, we had this, like a part of a hatch, I think, the sides of the 'plane where I think probably the maintenance people would open this hatch and it had a, it had a handle on the outside and it was a square and it fitted, it fitted perfectly into our old, we had an old coal, wood burning fire place and this German 'plane's hatch was ideal to draw the fire up, to put there into the fireplace, and with the draft and flue it drew up, it came in very useful. And we had another piece out the back garden of, it had come off a German 'plane and it had just one bullet hole in it, which was weird but it wasn't riddled but it was a piece we found and kept as a souvenir and I don't know what happened to it, if we had it now, it would be a useful souvenir, a bit gruesome but that was life.

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CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

00:09.46

You said that the police came to school, would you mind telling me about that if you can remember?

Yes, they came to school and said "It's come to our notice that a lot of children have ammunition, explosives which are dangerous and illegal to have which they've taken from crashed aircraft" and I think they gave a week to allow you to hand them into the police station or the teacher at school and we had quite a bit, my brother and I had quite a bit of, got a few canon shells on belts and my father said "you'll have to get rid of it or hand it into the police station." We said "well, we'll get rid of it" and we threw it into the river and 'cause we were, we were very afraid that they might come knocking and quite a lot of the children had souvenirs. We were, Terry and I, my older bother, we were quite 'predators' they say Terry, being two years older than me, he, he seemed to have a connection with air raid wardens and Home Guard because he, he always seemed to (on the grapevine) know where 'planes had come down, if they'd come down in the night time, he knew the next day at school and he'd be away on his bicycle to the crash. We went to some crashes before even the air force, the, what they call the R.A.F. Regiment used to guard the 'planes and before they even arrived and when an American Liberator came down just outside at Lymington, at Undershore Road just as you go over the Toll Bridge, straight through, Undershore Road, beyond Wallhampton Hill, the Liberator came down, it took off one evening and came down, made a terrible explosion, we could hear it here and we went there the next day and it was all the guards were there and these American military people and we, and we, they wouldn't let us in, the guards, to let us have any souvenirs so, it's a bit gruesome, but we did a deal with them, Terry, or Terry's friend had seen part of the crew, without going into details, up in a high bush, like a hedge, they'd seen, and it was a flying boot attached to it and we told them but they said "No, we've secured the area and cleared it, and there's nothing like that." And we said, "Well, we know there is." And this officer thought 'we'll be in trouble if it's found later' so he did a deal with us, and give us a big sheet of bullet proof glass, we showed him where this body part (not very nice) used to have cardboard boxes with sawdust in, wasn't very nice, and, but we respected, we respected the dead and we saw a lot of personal possessions in the 'plane crashes and we knew right from wrong, not to touch it. And I suppose, I suppose during the war, children became hardened, not in a callous way but just hardened, streetwise.

00:13.58

- Ammunition and explosives confiscated from school children
- Following 'plane crashes to find souvenirs

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<p>And of course, later in the war, we had, when the air raids were quite heavy, we, my father, he was deferred, he worked at Wellworthies, on, he was a skilled machinist and they were making parts for aircraft and tanks, so he wasn't called up. Several men in our road were deferred and they, they got together and Into a ditch, it ran at the back of our houses, they dug out a shelter and laid railway sleepers across the top and a bit of tarpaulin but the water still came in the sides and when the bombing was at its worst, they, we, we seemed to get the remnants of 'left overs' because we could hear the 'planes coming in from the French, French airfields, the German 'planes and then they used to split up at the Needles, nice move at night and you'd hear them high up and you'd hear some going up over, going towards Southampton, Portsmouth, Cowes and The Isle of Wight, others went up that way to the Midlands, Coventry and places, it was quite, it was quite known, the Home Guard said that the, and the air raid wardens that the Needles was a dispersal point and they used to come in and you'd hear the engines throbbing high up, they'd go on, you know, and there'd be a terrific amount of 'planes but they'd go over, but on the way back, we sometimes got the bombs, maybe the 'Ak-Ak' was very heavy around Southampton and Portsmouth and they thought, 'blow this, we'll drop them in the Forest', maybe.</p> <p><i>So how often did you have to go to your air raid shelter in the garden?</i></p> <p>Quite often, this was down the bottom of the garden and if, if it was really bad, they'd send my father and the other men home from, they were doing nights mainly, 'cause my father was in the Home Guard during the daytime, and he'd be doing night and they'd send the home with families, you know, with the families, to help the women with the children because of carrying them to the air raid shelter and there was five of us and we'd sometimes not wake up, we'd wake up sometimes being carried out of our bed, sometimes you'd wake up <i>in</i> the air raid shelter. And we had, downstairs, we had what they called a Morrison shelter, which was four steel corners, a square with a very light steel cover over and the Nissan shelters were in the gardens weren't they? but we didn't have Nissan shelters, we had the Morison shelter but my father didn't think, and the other men that if the house came down, that it would take much so we, we went, to this dug out in the clay and dirt, these shelters that were dug out, these big shelters, communal shelters we shared. And it was very uncomfortable, especially in winter time and, like I say, it must have been dreadful for civilians as well as people that were serving in the services but people that, like our parents, you know, the worry of air raids, getting carrying children to the air raid shelters.</p> <p>00:03.49</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digging communal shelters • German 'planes flying over and 'dumping' bombs in the Forest 				

- Carrying children to the air raid shelters

What did you have in the air raid shelter?

Just, just oil lamps and that was it because the air raids, the air raids seemed to peter out about five o'clock in the morning, they seemed to all go back to their bases, they probably were getting low on fuel, dropped all their bombs wherever and off they'd go and then we'd go, Terry knew, Terry (on the grapevine) knew where bombs had been dropped, I mean the big ones, there were huge craters.

Do you remember any particular...?

Yes, oh yeah. There was, I think it's called **Platoff Road**, back of the All Saints Church at Woodside, on the road going down near to the Chequers pub, there was just off the road in a field, was a huge crater. And there was also one at, one just off **Balmer Lane**, a huge one in Sir William **Seed's** garden. People did say, as big as you could have a double decker bus in it. That was a huge one and, the only building that suffered was Ford's furniture shop which was incendiary bombs but its now just been converted to a Weatherspoons pub and that was the only place on Lymington High Street. I think they were after the Wellworthies factory and that night they bombed that shop, furniture shop, burnt it down, and just in a field which is now built on, its now houses which is part of **Belmore Farm**, top of Lymington High Street, where we got our milk from, **Belmore Farm**, the field, we went there the next day after the raid, we got a tip off and went there and there was incendiary as far as you could see across the field and there was cows grazing there as well, they were after the factory, the Germans knew the factory was there. They were after the factory because these incendiaries were, you know, on a 'plane, high up, I suppose it's only dropping your bomb a few seconds later than you should or earlier would mean you missed the factory and you landed a quarter of a mile away. And they were all burnt out and we used to take the fins off the top.

00:06.23

- What was inside the air raid shelters
- The bombing of Lymington High Street, attempting to destroy the Wellworthies factory

And what did you do with them then?

Well, swapped, swapped them and kept some and swapped and there was a lot of bartering went on during the war with the school children.

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CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ALISON BARNES

If we just go back to the air raid shelters for a moment, so what did you do if you went down to the air raid shelter at night? Could, did you have a bed to sleep on or...?

No, no, no, the men, the men made some makeshift, you know, knocked up a few wooden pieces of wood and made improvised seats, if you could call them seats and that was it and then we'd go back and we'd be carried back in, or walked depending how old you or the children were, or the siblings, and we'd go back, back into the house and into our beds and then in the morning on the way to school we'd pick, we'd pick up another, German 'planes used to drop silver paper to clog up our radar systems, we used to find that on the roads, being dropped in the night, that was another thing we used to collect and shrapnel which was usually from the anti-air craft, our own guns, the shells, shrapnel, pieces of shrapnel, that was another good thing to find, for souvenirs. And my pal was, and his sister were on bikes in Stanley Road and a German 'plane came along in daylight and was machine gunning the road, you know. They just rode into a hedge and their bikes and hid, flung their bikes in the hedge and hid. And it came down the road and we, but we, one day in the summer holidays were in our garden and this, even at school we were shown silhouettes of German 'planes and British 'planes, they came to give us a lecture, showed us what was the shapes and the German 'planes sounded different to ours, and of course, they were all different markings and this one afternoon we were on our holidays, we were playing and this German 'plane was, it was hedge hopping to get back to its base in France and it was very, very low and it was going very fast and low down and we, we looked and it was gone almost, so quick and we could see the rear gunner so I think it was a **Dornier** he was looking down at us, they had sort of , it looked like a sort of rubbery, like a helmets, they wore like a yellowy brown and he was looking down at us but they weren't interested, they were interested in getting away, they weren't going to try and kill civilians and things. 'Cause, you know, you had some Germans that were real Nazis and some that were quite gentlemen and there was an anti-aircraft gun over at Lymington pier. He went that way, we were living down Close then, he went that way, so low to avoid the air craft on the radar and he'd gone, he must have been over Beaulieu when they fired one shot, they must have been having a tea break or dozing, and he was, he was so quick and low that by the time they realised it, he'd gone. He must have been over East Boldre or Beaulieu by the time they fired the one shot. Isn't it funny really, there were some funny things happened during the war. And then of course, later on, when, approaching D-Day, then the build up to the D-Day invasion, that was, that was big excitement for us children. And the Forest was invaded, friendly invasion.

What do you remember about that?

Oh, I can remember all the roads clogged up with vehicles, tanks and Carriers and can remember them queuing up for gas, petrol, I remember, any garage around Lymington in those days there was lots more garages, they just pumped by the handle and it was funny,

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these Americans with their pump, to fill up big tanks and jerry cans and things, that was preparation for D-Day. And of course, I think Terry told you about the American navy came to the pier at Lymington.

Yes, could you tell me again 'cause you probably remember different things?

Yes, the, they came to the pier and they were the infantry landing craft, preparing for D-Day and they were here for about, I suppose it must have been about a week they were here before the actual D-Day, so we knew the Americans were well provided for, generous so we weren't very long in making our way there, we swam there, about four of us swam. And Terry, Terry pushed me along because I wasn't a very good swimmer. I learnt to swim in Lymington baths but he pushed me and an American saw us coming and he swam to the slip way where the cars drive down to in peace time onto the ferries. We swam to that and then went over and they were, they welcomed us but they said, "It's very dangerous what you've done." You know with the tidal currents in the river. The captain then On this first one we went on, 'cause we made friends with, so I'll always remember **Brad Horton**, Captain of on Always remember the number and he instructed his store keepers to give us tinned rations, 'cause they knew they were all rationed, anyway they were all instructed before they came to Britain that we were all on rations and not to show off and not to throw your money around and not to, you know. So they were pleased, I think, to give us some of their food, and they gave us tinned food and I'll always remember ham and egg, ham and egg in tins, ham and egg cold meats and their chocolate bars were very hard, dark chocolate, very hard bars and then tins of, tins of segments, orange and grapefruits which we'd never seen in our lives, 'cause we didn't see any oranges or bananas till the end of the war. And, and they gave us this rations, tinned food, on condition we went back home to Lymington along the road, over the toll bridge and not to try swimming it otherwise they wouldn't give it to us because it was dangerous. They were very nice and generous, the Americans. And the British Railway guards, the Southern Railway guards was quite jealous and tried to take some of the stuff off us but we wouldn't have that but when we went down the road from the pier, down near the Waggon and Horses pub (do you know the Waggon and Horses?) opposite there is a cut way which goes right through to the railway line and so we, we, then went through there and took the short cut, walked across the railway bridge and came out near the quay. And so, we did what the Americans said but we defied the Southern Railway, the British guards.

00:15.10

- German attack in daylight
- Deployment of silver paper in an attempt to undermine the radar systems
- D-Day preparation
- American generosity (giving tinned goods)

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So you visited the Americans again did you?

Yes! We went there several times.

Do you remember any of them in particular?

Yes, I can remember they used to sometimes, 'cause they were on duty, they used to ask us to take notes to girls, there was girls used to, I don't know if you know near the pier, there used to be a garage selling petrol, a Shell garage coming towards the Waggon and Horses from the pier on the left hand side, well in the war, it was just trees and overgrown and the sailors would be watch keepers so some of them made friends with the Lymington girls, the Lymington girls would been waiting for them to come off duty, but some would say, "Could you take a note for us?" and they'd give us half a crown or something to take a note to the girls to say what time they were coming off duty or whether they couldn't come off duty that evening. And so they quickly made friends and then, up at the, up at the fighter base, up the hill, at the back of, the back of Lymington pier, up there, the Thunderbolts, that was also very exciting for us. And but it was in the Lymington paper, years ago about us having a near shave and..

Would you describe that to me?

Yea, the, the 'planes were taking off, we were on the airfield and we, on the side of the airfields and they were parked, the Thunderbolts (P47s) and they used to lift us up into them and it was exciting, the ground crew would lift us up and I, you know, I noticed how, it's like in a new car, the smell, the newness of the 'planes and they but they only had the one stick, not the ... controls like you see in films. And I can remember, I was quite surprised it was just a stick with a button on for the canons and this 'plane, these 'planes were taking off and one's undercarriage I believe collapsed and they carried a couple of light bombs, small ones, and that went off and a terrific explosion and flames and this, this one was coming in on one wheel, on its side careering off the main runway towards us and this, this American airman, ground crew pushed Terry and me into this, they had like, they'd cut, they'd cut trenches out 'cause of air attacks and they pushed us down, he pushed us down in and this 'plane veered away, didn't come too near us but went into parked 'planes where we'd been earlier, and set them alight, they were parked close together and Lymington fire brigade came and stood by but the air force, the American air force brigade, sort of let them burn out but, Alan Brown, the historian from Lyndhurst who wrote books about the airfields of the New Forest, he was in contact with the American air force since because some of the pilots that were still alive came back, a few years ago, about twelve years ago, came back to the airfield, that survived the war and they said that nearly all the 'planes were damaged or shot down and had to be replaced when they got to, when they

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moved over to France. The squadron, two squadrons I think there were, they all had to be replaced and pilots as well, the pilots were either injured or took prisoner or dead and they had to replace almost all the pilots and all the 'planes when they left here and they got over into France and, which was quite sad and Alan Brown, Alan Brown took, took, we told him about the, about the crash on the airfield and the American air force said they didn't recognise it happened but it *did*, we were there. And Lymington Fire Brigade were called over there and just stood by, back up. And Alan Brown told me that he thinks it was because a) they weren't supposed to park 'planes so close together, one 'plane caught fire and it caught the next one on fire and the next one. And there was huge, huge, you know cost and military 'planes, plus, Terry and I shouldn't have been allowed on the airfield. So the American air force didn't deny it but didn't recognise it.

00:20.36

- American personnel asking the children to take notes to the Lymington girls
- Incident on the airfield where a 'plane was out of control and crashed into parked 'planes setting them on fire

What else do you remember about D-Day? Did you see any of the ships out in the Solent?

Yes, well, again Terry and I made friends with the British crew of a tug, there was one tug attached because when the Americans used to come back from the war beaches, sometimes, I don't know whether it was steering or mechanical, would go aground, the tug had plenty of work pulling them off. And this tug crew were mixed up 'cause they came to our house for, for one of our birthday parties one day and there was a Scotsman, an Englishman, a Yugoslav and, a couple of other, you know mixed 'Poles' and things, fighting, came over here and they were the crew of the tug so we were good friends with them and then they said that we'd have to keep our heads down, keep out of the way, they were going on with all the letters, you know, the mail delivery round all the ships, we were about two hours in the back cabin, peeping out through the portal, and not to show ourselves and we went down the river, went round all the ships and they delivered the bags of mail, you know, and there were all these sailors were all looking down, they didn't have the soldiers on board then, because they were embarked, they weren't embarked until the day before, you know, D-Day or overnight or the day before, so it was just the crews on the, on there and it was packed, you know, the Isle of Wight from Lymington seafront was just a mass of ships and the end one, the end one which was just to the west of Lymington, near Hurst Castle, the end one, the Americans used for live ammunition, they used to throw empty cans and drums in the water and fire at them, practice, you know, they had to use just the end ship, couldn't use the middle ship, it would be like a, you know what they say, firing squad made in a circle, kill their own people. But we, it was, you know, you can probably guess, it was exciting. It was really, it was really something which is embedded in your memory.

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And were there a lot of troops moving into Lymington then?

Oh yes,

Ready for embarkation?

Oh, yeah. They, some of the houses around Lymington, some of the big houses had been confiscated, people had moved out and some of the bigger houses and they'd had Americans, and Canadians, and you knew they were occupied because there was usually a couple of jeeps outside and ... Edwina, Edwina Wilkins who, next road to this road, she was older than us, she was about eighteen, nineteen, college student and the Americans wanted someone to do shorthand and take down statements from the pilots when they came back from the D-Day beaches, and I was speaking to her, I think she's in, she must be late eighties, she, I think she's in a care home now but about ten or twelve years ago, I spoke to her and spoke to her about the war, and she was saying how because it was, she was sworn to secrecy and she would sit in on the briefings when they flew back, so she, she heard reports about what was happening and on the beaches and inland from the beaches, she heard it straight from the pilots' mouths and then it would be a communiqué, it would be sent to the War Office or Eisenhower's office, and Montgomery's and Churchill's but she had all that information before they did, or she was one of them that did, because they were flying into other bases but she was, she had to swear to secrecy obviously and she said it wasn't until after the war, she told her neighbours, well her mother did, she told her neighbours that, what she did because they used to send a vehicle for her at eight o'clock in the morning to take her over there and sometimes, you know, there was nothing, the Americans, there was nothing that was too much trouble, some day it would be a little jeep, some day, because of whatever transport they had available, it would be a huge lorry, and she had to be helped up into, you know, the huge thing, like that one outside of the, that type of thing, like you had at Lyndhurst, she said the neighbours used to wonder where she was off to with these Americans coming and taking her and bringing her back in the evening. And then her mother told them, you know, after the war was over, what she did, 'cause as soon as they moved, it was about two weeks after D-Day, they moved a few miles inland, the troops and then they'd freed up land in France to build a temporary air field for the fighters from, so they then flew, flew them into France, you know, we're talking about the temporary airfields, the steel rolls, which ... But they say, they laid the foundations for a lot of the runways in the fields from the rubble and brickwork from the bombed out houses in Southampton, which is sad.

So one day you woke up and the ships were not there, all the troops had gone?

Yes, we knew it had happened because they came, they flew, came quite near our house, they came, they started flying about five in the morning, June the 6th, you know, in daylight

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and they, we heard them, you know the roar of them coming up, taking off and it was a westerly gale been blowing and they were taking off east and west, coming this way from over the water, you know, where the base was and they, then, then when we came down from school, sort of late afternoon, they were still coming back and taking off and they were just coming up over the hedge and sort of more or less coming up over the sea water baths, going out west towards the Needles and the French coast and it was, we knew it had happened and it wasn't admitted for twenty-four hours because of secrecy and they would see how it went 'cause they were afraid, it was like that, whether it was successful and then, of course, we had, we had, what's never been sort of mentioned and remembered on the, in wartime history was we had a minesweeper down, tied up down by the quay, I'll show you where...

- Making friends with the tug crew
- Secretly going on mail delivery around all the ships
- Mass of ships in the Solent prior to D-Day
- A neighbour employed to take short hand accounts of personell coming back from different operations, all secret

Minesweeper at Lymington Quay

File name	B-G	007	0003M0.WAV	Interview date:13/07/13
<p>So this minesweeper was tied up at Lymington, by the car park on the quay but it was an open coal yard, they used, barges used to come up and deliver coal so this minesweeper was there and it was the latter part of the war and it had a silver barrage balloon flying above it and a lot of the locals thought it just drew attention to the town area and the quay and they weren't very impressed, they thought it was, it could just cause, you know, German 'planes that were, you know, looking, photography, daytime photography and things, would pick up something that they were protecting, it was just this naval, and 'cause Lymington Quay had Navy guards each side, you couldn't get onto the quay unless it was access and you lived there, so I had a pal whose grandparents had The Ship Inn by the quay, the Becks, so I got access to the quay with him, I was, I must have been very shrewd for my age and we got, we were allowed through, there was guards each side and they had big corrugated gates and a fence put up so the quay was out of bounds unless you lived down there, you know. And we had, about a quarter of a mile from here, down Woodside, Normandy Lane, huge searchlight and ack ack gun and that used to come up very bright, big light and that used to, as soon as they were coming in, and dispersing at the Needles the searchlight used to go on and we knew soon that we'd hear the 'planes and you could see it from our house, the searchlight, it was huge and it used to move about and, of course, then, course then we had, later on, then we had the German Prisoners of War and the camp.</p> <p><i>What do you remember about them? Which camp was it?</i></p> <p>Well, Setley up on the Lymington, Brockenhurst Road, opposite the Filley Inn, nearly. And they, it was an open camp they had bicycles, they were given bicycles, they came into town and as you know, some of them married local girls, they, they were guarded but it was an open camp and they had a different, their uniforms had been changed to show they were Prisoners of War, but not in an obtrusive way, they had like one or two patches, you know like a Harlequins rugby shirt, and, but quite a subdued colour, not fluorescent or anything and Max Who's been chronicled as, on BBC television last year, well, Molly ... married him, Max. Alfie ... was another school mate of mine, so I went to the reception in their house, the next road, Road and he, he was a gentle, he was a fearsome looking man, he was a huge man and he, and at the swimming baths, he had a bandana and his, his appearance was fearsome but he was a gentle giant. He taught quite a few of the children to swim and always had his Alsatian dog with him, used to sit on the side and wait for him, knew which steps he'd come up, come out of, the dog would sit there patiently and he, he kept discipline at the camp, Setley. I believe the dog was captured with him and us or the Americans allowed him to bring it and he kept the discipline at the camp. The British guards really must have been a really cushy number, as they say, because they didn't have anything to do really and the Germans weren't interested in escaping, 'cause there was nowhere to go. Germany, the big cities was in a mess, you know, Germany was in a mess,</p>				

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there was nothing for them to go, that's why quite a lot stayed, could have gone home but stayed and some married local girls and worked on the farms and did work and Max married Molly and they had two children and he ran a butchers shop for a long time and he was huge, when you're small obviously, adults look quite big to you, but he was extra big, he was a huge man. And I can understand him, I tell you what his rank was, I never did know if he was a sergeant or whether he was an officer but he kept, he kept control, he ran the camp.

00:05.54

- Minesweeper at Lymington Quay, locals not happy!
- POW camp at Setley

So they came down to the swimming pool for exercise?

Yes, yes, they could use the swimming pool and the, they came there and behaved themselves 'cause Max was a disciplinarian and he was a fearsome looking man but, you know especially with the bandana, kept his hair back when he was swimming, and he was a gentle giant, lovely man.

Do you remember any of the other prisoners?

Yeah we spoke to quite a few and I knew one, I think his name was Hans, he married a girl down by The Mayflower pub, Pearl, he married a girl, and we spoke to several of them and they were pleased still to be alive, ... and that, some Italians came as well, they were pleased, they didn't fancy, they didn't fancy the being in the war anyway, Mussolini hoodwinked them into, you know forced them, they weren't willing to go to war, the Italians at all, the Germans were but not the Italians.

So did they, were there any Italians prisoners at Setley as well as Germans?

Yes, yes and they came round in the same uniform and they used to show us pictures of their family, their wives and all the brothers and sisters back home, and that.

And did they, were you aware of the prisoners going out to work?

Yeah, they used to be taken out to some of the big farms that needed, say digging root vegetables or picking strawberries in early summer and they'd take them, take, take them out in lorries, army lorries to the farms because they were also helping to alleviate the shortages and they, the German prisoners of war helped a lot when the war finished with

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getting Britain back on its feet.

Did you ever see the prisoner of war camp at Setley?

Oh yes, never went in there but saw it, you used to see it

What did it look like?

Well, it was huts with the barbed wire round like, like you see on films but we used to see it from the bus, you know, get on the bus, going to, we used to go once a week to Brockenhurst College for doing woodwork and if we didn't take the train, we'd take the bus and go right past the prisoner of war camp. Most of them had, were supplied with bicycles and they were, and I think, I don't think many of the Italians stayed here, I think they were glad to get back to 'Mamma' and their families but the Germans, you know, were more resolute people, aren't they, industrious people and they, they fitted in quite well, most of them. I did hear a nurse, a woman I knew that was a nurse, a young nurse at Lymington Hospital, told me that they had several Germans that had been air crew that had been parachuted down and they'd been shot down and they'd been, but there was only one that give them trouble, you know, real Nazis that hated to be shot down and hated, you know, swore at the nurses and doctors and was a real, a real Nazi who wished he'd been killed and didn't want any medical attention but, but that was an exception to the rule, was quite unusual 'cause most of them were pleased to be in one piece still.

Do you remember any of the other airfields when you were going out exploring the Forest?

Yes, Beaulieu, Beaulieu Airfield which had, had British 'planes there early in the war and toward the latter part, it was Liberators, all painted silver, we'd go on our bikes and, you know, between Lymington and Beaulieu, Hatchet Pond, you know. there's the dip and there's Crockford Stream, well, we'd go on our bikes, we'd go down the dip, up the other side going towards Beaulieu and you'd come up the hill and then there was this exciting sight of all the Liberators all parked right down near the road, there was a fence been put up, they're all parked right down near the road that goes onto Hatchet Pond.

- PoWs using the swimming pool for exercise
- Italian PoWs
- One German in the hospital refusing medical treatment
- Beaulieu airfield with the Liberators

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File name	B-G	007	0004M0.WAV	Interview date:13/07/13
<p><i>Let's get going again, you were talking about Beaulieu, so you saw all the aeroplanes there, did you see any of the buildings at the airfield?</i></p> <p>Yes, there was, 'cause, we were, security was tight there, not like the P47 Thunderbolt base, where we had access, there was no fencing, so we couldn't get in there, we could, you know, watch the 'planes taking off and landing and that was towards the end of the war when they were mainly doing, the Liberators, they used to attack the U-Boats, they used to fly long distance out in the Atlantic, and then out to escort the convoys, you know when the convoys were coming across, the U-Boats used to attack the convoys and they were the lifeline, bringing oil and provisions and military stuff and the Liberators, used to, the American and Canadian 'planes used to come with the convoy so far and because of fuel and distances travelled, there was a spot in the middle of the Atlantic where you couldn't have air cover but I believe the Liberators had extra fuel tanks and then they could pick up where the American, Canadian escorts reached their furthest point. And then they escorted the convoys in and they depth charged them, had quite a lot of successes I believe since, 'course at the time I didn't know all this, I knew they were Liberators but they were anti-submarine, they weren't used for hardly anything else and they were on the west, out, flying out to the Atlantic and just over the western approaches off Lands End and the Chanel and back, other side of Ireland and they were covering the western approaches. It was a Liberator that came down, the one I told you about, it came down at Pilley, just, just the other side of Wallhampton Hill, Undershore Road, Vicar's Hill, that's where they came down and they'd just taken off, all killed and they'd only just cleared Pilley village and, very low and didn't make it, I think it was mechanical problem and Terry, Terry, don't know if Terry told you, he went to a Mosquito, a Mosquito came down in the afternoon.</p> <p><i>I was going to ask you about that, so you were not there for that?</i></p> <p>No, Terry was there</p> <p><i>Yes, I got a note about that</i></p> <p>I went there afterwards and the wreckage was there, I went there after but Terry was there when it had just happened and one man was in the ditch, parachuted down, broken his leg. I think the other man never got out of the 'plane. Went to the 'plane and there was all personal photographs and documents still in the 'plane, still in the 'plane. 'Cause there was such a lot of these crashes that they must have prioritised where, where to guard. R.A.F. regiment used to guard them, always remember they had rifles with a spike on the end, not a bayonet, a spike! The, Terry, Terry got there when he was shouting for his buddy and there was a lady, a lady from one of the houses, quite near, she was there, trying to make</p>				

his, make him more comfortable and he was, he was just at the white gates that come from **Kings...** out into the lane, he landed in the thing and of course, he crashed the Mosquito, I think it was mechanical, wasn't war, wasn't enemy action, he'd blown up he engine or something, on its way because we found pieces of the 'plane right across the marsh, from the mouth of the Lymington River, it was right across the marsh to where it came down so it must have been blown up, engine explosion or something, you know, say a mile before where it actually came down and one of them was able to parachute out but he was probably very low and he'd broken his leg. And we had, and then we had another 'plane, this was another Canadian pilot killed and he missed The Wagon and Horses by about fifty yards and came down there, there was a house built right behind The Waggon and Horses, there's like a lane at the back and they, it was a Saturday morning and he'd been showing off to the girls from the laundry, there was a laundry opposite the cut way, opposite The Waggon and Horses, there was Lymington Laundry there and the girls at eleven in the morning were out having a cup of tea and he was flying round, doing low manoeuvres and he was too low or too slow, stalled and killed.

- Beaulieu airfield Liberators
- American and Canadian convoys
- Mosquito crash

Canadian pilot killed while 'showing off' to the girls from Lymington Laundry

File name	007	007	0005M0.WAV	Interview date: 13/07/13
<p>The ambulances, the military ambulances were breakneck speed right, driving around, they knew, they had an idea he'd got out of the 'plane very low and they were all looking for him and we met a girl with a baby in a pushchair, quite matter of fact she said, "He's up in the bush with a parachute wrapped around him." just at the back of The Waggon and Horses, almost in the garden of The Waggon and Horses and we stopped an American ambulance, told him, directed him, you know, it was, we'd become, not callous but hardened, we, you know, we respected the dead. Then at the end of the war, we had some wonderful air displays, the airfields were open to the public, Beaulieu we had some wonderful air displays there, Beaulieu, free flights in Yorks and, queued up for ages to get, go up and round and down on the York aircraft</p> <p><i>You had a go did you?</i></p> <p>Yes, oh yes, our father took us and there was the Airborne, jumping from, you could go down to the banks down on the side of the Lymington River, this was leading up to D-Day and you could see all the parachutes coming down and this was the whole sky, you know, half the horizon was parachutes coming down. It was either dropping stores or dropping people, rehearsal for D-Day and you could see them from Lymington dropping over on Beaulieu aerodrome, on the Beaulieu aerodrome and Alan Brown, the historian who died recently, from Lyndhurst, he was in the air force, he was a dispatcher, parachute dispatcher, and I flew from Beaulieu with the cadets, just, oh, be about two years, or a year and a half after the war finished because my father had to sign a form, ... form from, you know a disclaimer to, that he wouldn't claim if anything happened. We flew from Beaulieu for about an hour, went up and it was, it was the same 'planes as they used for parachute dispatching, they were called Villettas. And I think after the war, the civilian 'planes they were called Viscounts but we flew in a Villeta with the cadets, and that was quite hilarious, us all being small, you know, going to the parachute shed and the girls, the Air Force WAFs girls all laughing 'cause they tightened up the harness as tight as they could but it still hung down to the ground because we were small and they would say "are you left handed or right handed?" 'cause there was the D clip for pulling if you had to, God help us if we had to jump out, but we, we went up for an hour, Lyndhurst, Salisbury all round the Needles, had a look at Lymington then back and I can always remember, it was, the pilots came in, two pilots to take us up, must have been their, came in on their day off 'cause they had, you know, civilian shirts, you know, civilian clothes and they were like collar and tie, shirt and slacks, not uniform or nothing, they took us up, you know, it was good. And our officer come with us and it was quite nice, we flew from, we flew on the east to west runway, we took off, came up over the road, the Beaulieu, Hatchet Pond road, we came up over the road and then landed the other way, came back in.</p> <p><i>Excellent.</i></p>				

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Yeah it was and they say, the American pilots said when they were flying Fortresses and that from Beaulieu, they said that from, coming back at night, especially when it was good weather, good clear night, they used to come back to land and they'd, they'd pick up Hatchet Pond, they used that as a guide 'cause that was, that was just about a minute or two from the runway, Hatchet Pond, you know, and they'd come over, coming in from east to west and they used, the Americans said after the war, they used Hatchet Pond as a guide, as a bearing, good to use as a bearing, you know.

00:05.18

- Air displays after the war at Beaulieu
- Going up in a York aircraft as a boy
- American pilots using Hatchet Pond as a bearing for the runway at Beaulieu

After D-Day, presumably you boys had a field day, finding all the leftover bits?

Oh yes, equipment, there was the, there was some people that were more organised, adults, they called them 'spivs' they, there was such a lot of equipment to dispose of, there was Bedford trucks and a lot of Americans left jeeps and things and, you know, there was four by four vehicles, which we didn't have here and they were being sold, almost given away, people that had ready cash could look ahead, they could see a business, they bought, and resold them later, you know, army lorries and equipment, obviously, you know, at the end of the war, the military had to hand in rifles, they had to return rifles and things but there was a lot of places around the Forest where munitions were dumped and there is even a theory now that maybe people up near Fordingbridge, their dogs are dying, have you heard about it? They think it could be, 'cause of all the rain we've had the last few years, it could have brought to the surface phosphorous and stuff from munitions. You see when the war finished, there was such a lot of things were then obsolete, no longer needed and they just, nobody wanted to know, I don't think, you see, we've got a lot of ammunition, where do we return it to? So they disposed of it safely, so if it was Navy, they'd dump stuff out at sea, and Army had to, and Air Force used to dig deep pits and all over the Forest, I don't suppose they were marked these deep pits. I heard from a good source there's one near Pilley but he wouldn't tell me where it was and he's dead now. Anyway, basically it was such a, such a lot of things and another site about a year after the war had finished, and the war in Japan finished, the ships all come back and they were decommissioned and some were scrapped and they took their, they took their, things that's worth saving and they took the gun turrets off with the guns on and they were all in Lord Tyneham's field, near South Baddesley church, do you know South Baddesley? And I can remember going there with a friend and we looked and what a sight, there was all these gun turrets off navy ships, some had paintings of girls in bikinis on and Betty Grable, the actress and all that and they'd been, some had German swastikas to show how many they'd shot down or how

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many U-boats they'd captured and sunk and they were, you know, the field was filled, Lord Tynehams house there before they were disposed of and they'd been taken off the navy ships. Of course, after a war like that there was, you know they needed then to, a lot of the steel was used then for construction, industrial construction, came in useful 'cause a lot of the places were bombed, bombed flat.

00:09.40

- Disposal of munitions in the Forest
- Lord Tynehams field full of gun turrets

Do you remember anything about Wellworthies factory, I know you said your father worked there. Did you ever go there?

Oh yes, I went there two or three times

What do you remember about it during the war?

Well, during the war, there was days, day shift and night shift and there was, where my father worked, was, which was specialist, they, they made pistons and piston rings for, I know the Spitfire pilots said they were very, give them extra speed and they did these precision, they were called 'top grinder', it was called 'top grinder' at Wellworthies where they made this, these specialist machinist, machining parts for the for the war effort and they, and its never, I don't think it even got an incendiary bomb, but it survived the war and it, it was obviously played a big part, Wellworthies, the factory. And there was one up Ringwood I believe too, Wellworthies factory and it survived the war and played a big part.

So a lot of the people that you knew, the men worked there, did they?

Yeah, and during the war 'cause a lot of the men were away, there was a lot, a lot of women worked there as well, a lot of Lymington women went to work there because of, you know, women in, in the World War 2, a lot of women then finally, it changed their way of life didn't it? They didn't stay at home and bring up families and then after the war of course, women became part of factory workers and, I mean to say, they learnt to drive, delivery trucks, and vehicles, vans and they were, there were still, the only men there were the men that were doing specialised, a lot of the men from the factories had gone away and the women took their places.

And did you say your father worked there at night and then was in the Home Guard?

Yes

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What did he do in the Home Guard?

Well, we went on a Sunday to see him guarding the factory, and he was on the corner of Priestlands Place in a hut and we thought it was very funny and he had, he had the rifle but he told us, it didn't have any ammunition but he had the rifle and I can remember because, 'cause he worked at night, he obviously, it was mainly weekends he did his Home Guard bit and he, it was really, it was real Dad's Army because he told me about this officer that took them, I don't know if you know Efford Mill? Where the New Forest Park Authority had their building? Well, if you go down the hill and then up the other side there's a stream runs through, this officer took them at night on manoeuvres, the Home Guard and my father couldn't have been one of those who, he must have been at the back of, back of the platoon, he wouldn't have been anywhere forward and volunteering to do anything. [Giggles] He said the officer took them down the bank and lost his footing and they all slid, and the first two or three behind him followed him and they all went right into the river, well the stream and my father had no chance 'cause he was at the back and they had a good laugh and the officer wasn't too, he did tell me the officer's name, he lived at **Kingshortens Road**. But real, real Captain Mainwaring stuff, you know! Like, Dad had a gun with no bullets!

Did he have a uniform?

Oh yeah, yeah

What was his uniform like?

Well, like a normal soldier and he had, he had these two pouches here, which you're supposed to have bullets in and gaiters and boots, we've got photographs somewhere in the house, of him in his Home Guard uniform. The, you know, he, he didn't, he did his bit but he wasn't in the armed services but he did his bit and he worked nights, producing the parts for the war effort. There was a piece in The Echo, about ten years ago and it said the piston rings from the Wellworthies factories gave the Spitfires, three miles an hour extra speed, I don't know how they judge that but they say the Wellworthy piston rings, they must have been in improvement on what they had before, but. I never, like I say, I sat up in an American P47 and right towards the end of the war, I sat in a Hurricane, and it was a Hurricane that was built for national savings and it was put on show at Lymington cricket ground. It was brought on a truck, with the wings folded in, built on a truck and put the wings back on. And it was there to collect money for the war effort and let us children, parents lifted us all up into the, sit up in the 'plane, you know, Hurricane. But I never did manage the Spitfire but they've got one over at Beaulieu, I believe, at the museum, Spitfire, Montague's museum. That was Lord Montague's daughter wasn't it? At...

General chat about an event at the Motor Museum and the historian Dan Snow

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- Wellworthies factory
- His father making piston rings for the Spitfire
- Women working at the factory
- Home Guard guarding the factory
- Dad's army type escapades
- Hurricane 'plane on show at Lymington for national savings

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CHAIRMAN OLIVER CROSTHWAITE-EYRE **CHIEF EXECUTIVE** ALISON BARNES

File name	007	007	0006M0.WAV	Interview date: 13/07/13
<p>It's the only ... I've ever seen, was Elsie ... from Lymington, I see it in American tech, American coloured war film of the, of the Omaha Beach and it was called, it was numbered 4-11 and our friend, where we used to go, who, who we were very friendly with, the crew was 540 and, but 4-11 was there tied up there all the time. I don't think, I don't know but I don't think they lost any ships on the invasion, and, you know, they obviously probably had some near shaves but, the, the Americans had, they had the rough, the worst part of the beaches to land on, didn't they?</p> <p><i>Did you, were the American troops in Lymington all white or did you have any black troops?</i></p> <p>No, the black troops, they came into town but they were camped separate from the whites, the black camp was Monument Hill, you know when you go up Wallhampton Hill, you go home you know where the Wallhampton Arms pub, you know, just as you come up the too of the hill from Lymington, the pub's there and there's a lane at the right, that's Monument Lane, they were down there, a bit down furthest near the pier, that was the black, that was the black camp, they were segregated.</p> <p><i>And do you know what they did?</i></p> <p>Well, they dished out stores and I think, I think did similar work to like the Pioneer Corps, like digging, digging trenches and helping to build places. They were, because of the segregation back in America, they were not entrusted I don't think, they were, and they were Americans, white American pilots were quite shocked when they were being escorted, you know, near the end of the war, being escorted over Germany by black pilots. There was a squadron of Mustangs of black pilots, we only heard about this since, you know, the latter years and they, they were college boys, and that, came from sort of middle class black families, with a good education and they learnt to fly and it was beyond the, you know, the white authorities to think, and a lot of people being bigots, they just couldn't believe that a black man could have the intellect and the brains to fly a 'plane and, and the squadron was successful. And when they were escorting deep into Germany, the American bombers, 'cause they had daylight raids, British did mainly nights, when they were escorted into Germany, they looked out the cockpit window, they see their escorts all have black faces. They don't, they didn't mind, they were quite welcome then.</p> <p>00:03.39</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American troops in Lymington and black troops having a separate camp <p><i>Take advantage of them then, yes.</i></p>				

They were quite welcome then but I believe, I believe that it helped to open up, it opened up, brought people together, you know, like segregation is divisive isn't it, you know, some people, they build up an attitude and a belief and of course, the black troops had all the dirty work to do.

Yes, that's what I've heard from other people. Did you come across any of the sawmills when you were in the Forest?

No,

I don't think they were over this way

There was saw, there were sawmills but the family over there, Norman Cutler, tree surgeons, his Dad had a sawmill in the war. I think, I think not far from Hatchet way, yeah.

Are they, you didn't come across the explosive, the ranges over at Ashely Walk, that was out of your patch presumably?

Yes it was, but we did, we were in the scouts, sea scouts, Terry and I and we had camp down at Farm, which is between Milford on Sea and Barton, it was up near the cliffs and it was taken over part of the, the cliff area was taken over by the military and they trained, they trained Navy Gunners and Merchant Navy Gunners, in civilian clothes, to fire guns and a 'plane used to fly, better than me, the 'plane used to tow a target along the cliffs, you know, over the sea, but just in front, and fire all the guns and there was blokes there that couldn't hit a barn door from fifty yards! And we were in the sea scouts, Terry and I and we would go up and watch, and it was after D-Day, although I'm not sure, because, yes, VE day had gone, 'cause we were called back from camp, 'cause the VE/VJ day, we could come back for the celebrations in town. And we left, we broke up camp early so we were there, we used to go and watch, **Hurricanes and Pom Poms** and all firing like mad and of course, souvenirs there was the parachutes and the little sand bag underneath, red parachutes, they shoot up on rockets to fire ... that was another souvenir which was hard to get hold of, the parachutes

Oh yes, for the silk, yeah

And do you know, you know, a lot of the girls got married at the end of the war, they had their dresses made from parachutes.

What do you remember about the VE day and the VJ day celebrations in Lymington?

Oh, yeah, yeah

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What happened then?

We watched the fights, we watched the troops fighting, I know it sounds bad but, finished up with a lot of drunk servicemen, letting off thunder flashes and rockets and then, they'd light a bonfire, say by the Angel Hotel in Lymington, and then the fire brigade would come and put it out and then they'd raid Fisheries and fish shop and get all the wooden pallets and light another fire, higher up the street and the police said, we couldn't understand why they had the fire brigade to stand by to put the fires out and they said there could still be a German U-Boat commander who didn't know the war was over, who hadn't received a radio message, he and he would fire at the flames, very, very remotely unlikely but, but in the end they let them, 'cause they started a fire elsewhere and there was soldiers, sailors, air and civilians all sorts and a lot of drunk people and I saw several of them, soldiers fighting with the sailors and vice versa and it was, you know, I know it was quite, a bit, you know, I'm highlighting a sort of negative part but most people were happy and enjoying themselves.

Did you have street parties?

Yes, oh yes and when the boys in our street, we had VE Day parties with the tables and the jelly and the cream and all that and then we had one, we lost five boys in our street, was killed, five and my Godmother's son was killed, Fred, Fred Hayward, he was a despatcher In Italy, but and another one, Terry I think told you, he was on the Hood, HMS Hood and we lost five but the last one to come back was a boy down the bottom of the road, he was a Japanese prisoner of war, and he came home on a ship, so the war was over, been over about two months, six weeks, two months and all the VE Day parties had taken place and finished and then they recalled the Forgotten people and, who'd been fighting in the Far East, and he came home and then his parents made him a big party, they were the Rook family, we were invited to that, that party but he was the only one that came back in our road, late, 'cause five didn't. I can remember one crying, there was a little boy going to the house with my mother and crying to my mother and they used to get the yellow telegram, used to get a telegram in an envelope, a yellow, the telegram boy, people dreaded the yellow telegram. Five, five in the old road down there, there was five, it was two navy and three army and it was sad really, the, in this road there was about, quite a few, I know Mrs Macster up there, her son, my mother was friends with, her son was in the Wiltshire Regiment, he was killed in Holland, in the final push but, you know, this is every town isn't it?

Everywhere was affected wasn't it? Let's finish on a high note, what do you remember about the cycle races in Lymington, 'cause Terry told me a little bit?

Yeah, the, the Americans used to have cycle races and they'd pay you to borrow your bike,

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bicycle, now, Terry leant one to, to one of the Americans and he brought it back punctured, he was very sad and he give Terry, and Terry said "No, my father will mend the puncture." you know, and he, he insisted on giving Terry a pound note, a pound note was equivalent to thirty pound, you know 'cause most men were only on five or six pounds a week in a factory and they, they would race each other and a lot of the, after they'd been out on the town and, you know Lymington High Street, the hill, two Americans went down the hill, been drinking a lot and went through, they managed to go slightly left and miss the railings and they went into the shoe shop window, it was Pages' Shoe Shop and it was repaired twice. I think the first time he had a piece of three ply wood put up in the window, 'cause it was hard to get replacement glass and then about a week later, another American on a bike went down the hill on the race, couldn't negotiate and went through the window, badly cut, had to be took to hospital and things they were, they were, they played hard.

And was it just Americans? There weren't any English people, in the races just the American troops?

No, just the Americans and there was a rival between the Americans Army and Air Force and the Navy, and the American Navy. The only time I saw racing was, which, I'm deviating now, was in Hong Kong with the British Navy, the Australian Navy and the American Navy. They used to get the rickshaw man and pay them and the rickshaw man would get in the rickshaw and they'd ... them and race, from the China Fleet Club to the main road. And then the police would arrive and arrest the poor rickshaw man. Australian Navy, British and American.

[Interviewer sums up]

- VE/VJ Day celebrations
- Fires lit in Lymington, troops 'getting rid' of ammunitions
- Cycle rides in Lymington High Street

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