

The Night They Bombed Nottingham

It was early May 1941 when we heard the sirens; we were getting ready for bed. Dad looked outside and said "It looks like us tonight" We went down the garden to the Anderson Shelter. Shrapnel was falling, the big guns at the top of the Wells Road were booming, the searchlights flashing across the sky. We had earplugs but I wouldn't wear mine - I liked to know what was happening!

We could hear the bombs falling on the town centre. They bombed the Lace Market, the Co-op bakery - a lot of people were killed there - also bombed was Truman Street and Lewis Terrace - the people there went to their cellars to escape the bombs but a gas main was fractured and sadly they were gassed.

Corona Soft Drinks was hit on Cooper Street and the Cavendish Cinema on St. Ann's Well Road. The Railway Bridge in the Wells Road was hit and the rail track screamed as it flew over our shelter, embedding itself in the school playground, gravel and dust came into our shelter. We were petrified then we heard the whistling of the bomb falling and Dad said "This is ours" but it didn't go off.

The bomb had landed in a garden in Thornywood. It went off with a bang the next afternoon. Luckily, the family were out, so no one was hurt. When the 'all clear' was sounded we came out of the shelter and looking towards the Town Centre the sky was red and orange, lit up like a bonfire. I'll never forget that night; it was the most terrifying night of my life.

In 1943 I, along with other women, worked as a Portress at Victoria Station. We had to load mailbags onto trolleys and take them to the train bound for Crewe. We swept the platforms early in the mornings and polished the brass

knobs on the stair rails. Many people used the trains to get to and from their work. I would say "Carry your bags Sir / Madam?"

Sometimes I would be given a sixpenny tip!

By far the saddest part, and it brought tears to our eyes, was seeing the trains passing through carrying the wounded lads. They were on stretchers built like bunk beds in the carriages

This story was submitted to the People's War site by CSV/BBC Radio Nottingham on behalf of Marjorie Wainwright with her permission.

Source acknowledgment

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/16/a4261916.shtml>

WW2 People's War

An Archive of World War Two memories

"I remember people saying that a shelter not far from our street (Laurel Street) got a direct hit and someone was killed. My mam used to gather all the kids up and they would sit under the table in a bombing raid. She said lots of people used to go to the caves under the castle, but that a lot got bronchitis and stuff and she said they were better off in their own houses"

Tony-Ann Miller: I remember that there used to be air raid shelters at the top of Beverley St on Hungerhill Rd. we used to play in them as kids, until they were eventually knocked down.