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Name: Joan Endersby

Regiment: WRNS

Date of Transcript:

Transcribed By:

Time Code	What is Said
01:00:00	Start of Film 1
01:00:01	My name is Endersby, I joined the WRNS in 1943....[Mayo] Emily Joan, but I was [Mayo] Emily Joan Williams in those days.
01:00:10	OK, Joan, you talk to me, not the camera....just a one-on-one conversation basically. Well, where are you from, and what was life like for you up to and during the early part of the war?
01:00:24	Do you mean in private, or before I went in the WRNS?
01:00:28	Before you went.
01:00:29	I lived in Liverpool, right through the bombing, and those days, I was determined to be a Wren. I volunteered the day I was seventeen and a half, in Liverpool, and was in before I was eighteen.
01:00:41	Well, I'll ask you about the WRNS....what do you remember of the bombing...because Liverpool was hit very badly, wasn't it?
01:00:47	Yes, very badly, but we were very fortunate...all we ever had was one of the balloons fastened round the chimney pot...apart from that, that was all we had wrong with us! We were very lucky indeed because we lived five miles out of Liverpool, so that made it a lot easier for safety's sake.
01:00:05	Are there any stand-out memories from the bombing?
01:01:08	No, except falling down the stairs and getting up and muttering horribly going down to the air-raid shelter at the bottom of the garden!
01:01:16	And, you know, do you have many brothers and sisters? What was your family make-up?
01:01:23	My father was in the Liverpool City police, and every night we had a bomb, bomb raid, he was on duty on the docks. I had one sister,
01:01:32	Why do you think you had an attraction for the WRNS over the other services?
01:01:38	I knew it was the best service to go into.
01:01:42	Why do you think you knew that?
01:01:45	Well, we'd been told often enough, you know...very, very difficult to get into the WRNS, and it was...I couldn't bear...I thought I might have got called up eventually and I couldn't bear the thought of going in the munitions factory, or even worse, in the Land Army! But I always wanted to be a Wren, I don't really know why.
01:02:08	What year was it when you were seventeen and a half and you became a Wren? What year was that?
01:02:13	1943.
01:02:14	1943...was that when they had this new draft, sort of another call out for Wrens?
01:02:19	Oh no, very seldom saw an advert for the WRNS, to join...and I was told, you could only be a steward or a cook, but the day I went I think I might have impressed the officer in charge, because nobody ever mentioned doing jobs like that when I went...I was a teleprinter operator.

Time Code	What is Said
01:02:39	<i>OK, well look, just talk me through a little bit about, you know, what happens after you've been accepted as a Wren...just talk a little bit about those, the early training and those first few weeks of becoming a Wren. What do you remember of it?</i>
01:02:55	Well as I say, it must have been in May that I volunteered, and in September I got called up, went to London, to Mill Hill, which had been taken over by the Navy, and we were up a 5 o'clock in the morning scrubbing steps...I think they wanted to make sure we were the right type to be accepted by them, and also in those days, if I didn't like the WRNS or they didn't like me, I could come home with no stain on the old character, but they spent all their time telling us we were far superior to anybody else, and if we deserted we were not taken back, we were out completely. It was a wonderful service to be in...I wouldn't have missed a day of it.
01:03:38	<i>And, I mean, had you been out of Liverpool much as a young girl?</i>
01:03:42	No.
01:03:43	<i>So what was that journey like to London? What was it like telling your Mum and Dad, and leaving the house?</i>
01:03:48	Well, if my grandmother had been alive I'd never have been allowed to go, she wouldn't have let me! But my father gave me permission, and...do you know, I can't remember whether...I wasn't scared about it, I knew there would be transport at the other end for me, to start the training. Then, after two weeks, I went to Westfield College in Hampstead, and there we learned how to be teleprinter operators, and it was in a lovely part of Hampstead, and at the bottom of the road was the house in which Konrad Weiss, the old German film star had lived, and it was all taken over with teleprinters and switchboards, that kind of thing...and from there, I went up to...I was there for about, until November, then I went to Blundell Sands Hotel in Liverpool which was a holding depot, and from there, on Christmas Eve, 1943, I ended up in Londonderry. An i...we lived in a hut, and I opened the door of this hut, there were six huts for the watch-keepers, I opened the door of this hut, which was a two-piece door, and it had all the decorations up, and little counterpanes with the WRNS crest on them, and I was totally and completely at home, I never missed home once. They were a great crowd of girls, I wouldn't...I never heard anybody, I never knew anybody who ran away or deserted, I never remember anybody falling out with everybody. The biggest regret I've got is I was so young I didn't realise what a good job I'd got, because fortunately, by the end of '43, the Battle of the Atlantic was very nearly won, although there were still U-boats hanging around...we once had a destroyer escort back after leave, but we knew every day where every convoy was from Derby House in Liverpool on the teleprinters, and sworn to secrecy, and of course all the girls wanted to know when their boyfriends were coming, and we were not allowed to tell, although we knew...and I lived in this big old house on the shores of Loch Foyle, and...had a little lighthouse on a little pier, so whenever I knew they were coming or going we could go down and wave...and in that book I told you about, when they all went...when the Canadians left for good, Boom Hall turned out and there were tears...and you know, it really was, but fortunately the war had ended and they were going home which was much better for them, but it was a Canadian escort all the time I was there.
	Start of Film 2
01:06:32	<i>When did you know that you were going to be doing that rather than stewardship or...cooks, was it cooks?</i>
01:06:39	In Mill Hill, when we were posted, we were told where we were going.
01:06:45	<i>And was your draft all going to teleprinters, or were some of them off to stewardship etc?</i>

Time Code	What is Said
01:06:51	I don't...I can't remember any of the others. I don't...there was nobody from Liverpool that I knew going there, although there could well have been, because I didn't know.
01:07:00	<i>OK...and what are you actually learning when you're in Hampstead? What is it your actually trying to learn about a teleprinter?</i>
01:07:08	Well, just how to manipulate them, because they were electrical of course, you have to learn how to time yourself on them...but it was very simple really, very noisy...yes.
01:07:20	<i>And what sort of stuff is it you're actually doing on it?</i>
01:07:23	Well, the convoys, in and out, or if there was an emergency, but whenever we had emergencies, the coders or the cipher queens, that was the officers, it was always in codes so we didn't know...well, we knew something was wrong, especially before D-Day, we were working three shifts for D-Day.
01:07:42	<i>So after Hampstead, you're then going back home, basically.</i>
01:07:48	Yes, to Blundell Sands Hotel, which was a holding depot, where you stayed until there was a place for you, wherever you were going to end up.
01:07:57	<i>Were you able to go home?</i>
01:08:00	No, we had to live in Blundell Sands, yes...you could go home when you had time off.
01:08:07	<i>So were you able to show your Mum and Dad your WRNS outfit?</i>
01:08:11	Yes, yes.
01:08:12	<i>I mean, if you've never been out of Liverpool, obviously you've experienced a bit of London, what do you remember of London? Did you get into the West End, or...?</i>
01:08:23	Very occasionally...a young cousin of mine was in the Air Force, and he came to London at the weekend, and we went out to Lyon's Corner Houses in those days, but otherwise no, we were too...we were really very busy, we were kept occupied all the time.
01:08:40	<i>OK, and from...just describe the Blundell Sands Hotel then, and what it was like.</i>
01:08:46	Very large hotel, rather posh, the north end of Liverpool on the way to Southport.
01:08:52	<i>Is it still there?</i>
01:08:54	I believe it still is but I'm not sure.
01:08:57	<i>OK, and you're waiting there, essentially, for a draft?</i>
01:09:03	Yes, yes, working though...we were doing domestic work, they kept us at it.
01:09:08	<i>And how...what do you know when you're given your draft, does it say where you're going, and what did you actually know at the time?</i>
01:09:16	Yes, I knew I was going to Londonderry, and the family had said they didn't care where they sent me, even Scapa Flow, provided they didn't send me to Ireland, and of course that was where I ended up!
01:09:27	<i>Just, so I think you've mentioned earlier, just describe the Wrennery for me.</i>
01:09:32	This big old house...going down to Lough Foyle, in the big old house...I believe it was one of General Alexander's family homes. It wasn't a mansion but it was a big house, and all the day workers lived in the house and the watch-keepers lived in Huts 1 to 6, and I was in Hut 2.

Time Code	What is Said
01:09:54	<i>And how many women in Hut 2?</i>
01:09:58	About ten.
01:09:59	<i>Quite big.</i>
01:10:00	Yes. Beautifully warm, an oil stove in the middle of the floor, and they were very nice girls.
01:10:08	<i>Describe a normal day for me then, so you wake up in the morning in Hut 2, what sort of time? Or are you working shifts?</i>
01:10:14	Well, there were three, four watches...morning till midnight, and then the next day you're off until evening, you went for the evening watch, and three watches of course when things got hectic.
01:10:29	<i>OK, and just in terms of...describe your job then, what are you doing?</i>
01:10:33	Well, just going down with...in a big wooden hut, more into Londonderry itself, we used to have big Army trucks to take us in, and there were about four teleprinters and the switchboard and the officers, the cipher officers, lived upstairs, and you just went in and all the machines were rattling away, you had to sign, sign them off when they'd finished their calls coming in, all from Derby House, we knew where all the convoys were in the Atlantic Ocean
01:11:11	<i>Can you try and describe, you know, what information you're getting or sending that enables you to understand convoy positions?</i>
01:11:22	Well it was in ordinary, ordinary English, very long lists like this because all the convoys...you see them going up each day, going up further then they'd go off because they'd be in Halifax or St John's, and then you'd see them coming back again.
01:11:37	<i>When you say you see them, how do you see them...because of the messages they're sending?</i>
01:11:41	Yes, yes, convoy ABC123, that kind of thin
01:11:46	<i>And it would send you its position, would it?</i>
01:11:49	Yes, yes.
01:11:50	<i>And were you able to understand the positions, or was that in code?</i>
01:11:53	I would think a lot of it was in code, and all the important messages, all the secret messages always came in code or cipher.
01:12:03	<i>And did you...did the machine make a different noise...</i>
01:12:06	Yes...
01:12:07	<i>...when it came in as a secret message?</i>
01:12:08	Yes, when it came...they're lying quite quietly, and then there's a rumble, and they start, and you have make sure that the paper's completely, you know, free, the paper won't be held up, but...long, long lists like this would come out.
01:12:25	<i>OK, so you're not actually doing typing as such?</i>
01:12:08	Oh yes, when I'm sending back, yes, you had to send out messages and then you just signed them on the bottom with your initials.
01:12:34	<i>Are there any messages that you recall specifically, that you either sent or received?</i>
01:12:41	Only when there was trouble. Fortunately, as I say, the Battle of the Atlantic was nearly over at the end of '43, we'd sort of got them under control, which was a blessing.

Time Code	What is Said
01:12:55	<i>Did you see codes where convoys would, you know, go out with lots and come back with less?</i>
01:13:01	No, you didn't see exactly what the position was, how many merchant ships went down...it was more the merchant ships than the Royal Navy ships.
01:13:11	<i>What did you know of D-Day?</i>
01:13:15	We didn't know anything about it, except that we were on three watches and appallingly busy...the machines never stopped working, day and night, and we knew something was up, but of course it was secret until D-Day actually happened, then of course we heard on the news that they'd made, the invasions had started, but actually, the actual thing itself, the only way we ever knew about anything was if you went to the cinema and saw it on the newsreel. We were quite isolated in that way, you know, I don't ever remember listening to a radio, we got on with our job. That was the most important thing, just getting on with our job.
	Start of Film 3
01:14:00	<i>Just describe what you were doing, and why you knew what you were doing was important?</i>
01:14:05	Well, we knew it was a very important job, coming over from...it came out from Derby House in Liverpool, which was the Headquarters of Western Approaches, and the teleprinter...I went to the teleprinter rooms, and they're just like very large typewriters, but rattling away, and these convoys...each day we knew where the convoys were until they went off the map altogether, you know, they got to Halifax or St John's, and then after a while you see them all coming back again, which was wonderful...and sworn to secrecy about it of course, because although the Battle of the Atlantic was very nearly over, there was still a little bit of activity with the U-boats, but if anything came in like that it was all in code or cipher, so we knew it was important, like for D-Day, we knew it was important, but we didn't know what was being said or done.
01:14:56	<i>And when you got a sort of, you know, you could see what was happening with a convoy, but certain messages would be different. How did you react differently to different messages?</i>
01:15:06	Well, if we knew what they were, you know, if it was in English, if it was printed out...sad I suppose, worried sometimes if we knew there was a bit of activity out there, there was nothing we could do about it, just take a note of it.
01:15:25	<i>And then if you had a coded message, you'd give that to somebody else?</i>
01:15:28	To the coders, or ciphers...to the officers.
01:15:31	<i>Something else I haven't asked you about is, in terms of you've talked a bit about either sending messages either out or to Derby House, just explain the code books and what you, you know, how did you do what you did?</i>
01:15:46	We never saw the code books, obviously, but it would just be given to us, a load of numbers or a load of figures. If I remember rightly, the coders were four letters, and lots of them, and we just had to type them into Liverpool, Liverpool only, and then with the others it would be in figures, the same again, but we wouldn't know what it was about.
01:16:09	<i>So you were given a sheet of paper were you?</i>
01:16:10	Yes, with the numbers on.
01:16:12	<i>And were they written or were they typed?</i>
01:16:14	Do you know, I can't remember. I think they would be written because it was the coders doing them. Yes, I think it would be written.

Time Code	What is Said
01:16:25	<i>Just tell me a bit, what it was like to be living in Derry. What do you remember of the city?</i>
01:16:32	Very poor city in those days, crowded with naval personnel, lots of little children with no shoes on saying, 'Give us a parney, give us a parney'. Yes, it was a poor city. The maiden city, it was never conquered...and we were about four miles out of town.
01:16:55	<i>And did you go into the city much?</i>
01:16:57	Oh yes, all the time.
01:16:58	<i>So tell me about some of the entertainment that you did then.</i>
01:17:03	Well, there was the Guildhall where they had innumerable dances all the time, and everybody, everybody got a chance to dance because there were so many men compared with so few women!
01:17:15	<i>Any dances that stand out?</i>
01:17:19	No, not really. I met all my boyfriends...my father was a Christian Scientist, and there was a Christian Science reading room in the Diamond, and that's where I met all my boyfriends. They were the kind of men who were looking for that kind of off-duty entertainment. They had rooms there where they could just sit quietly, write their letters home, or just relax. It was run by an Australian lady who couldn't get home because of the war coming, and that's where I met all my boyfriends.
01:17:57	<i>That's nice...so what is it, sort of like a church?</i>
01:18:00	No, it was just a room, it was taken over by a shop, there's no, not...Christian Science never took over...well, it's never taken over in this country, has it? In those days it was a very small, very small concern, but it was only sort of boys who knew about it that went into the rooms. It was just a large shop, made out with as much comfort as they could get. You know, they could read there, or take me out.
01:18:27	<i>The type of...so when you say young boys, are you talking about Canadian, American sailors, or...?</i>
01:18:34	Mostly Canadians...very occasionally there was American soldiers...American sailors came in, but very seldom. It was nearly all Canadians.
01:18:45	<i>OK...and would they talk to you about what they'd experienced on their sailings?</i>
01:18:52	No, no, they just...in that book I was telling you about, they said 'Just coming up Lough Foyle', and the greenery and the peace, and know that they were safe until they went out again, and having somewhere to go to, and I had other very good friends in Derry, and I used to go to them a great deal. There wasn't the shortage of food there that there was at home, and on many a Sunday night I've seen a crowd, a real crowd of people singing round the piano, and I didn't realise then, that is what they needed, you know, to get away from the war, and living in close quarters with the other sailors, and hearing about what they were getting up to, you know, I think it was good for them, but I didn't appreciate it enough at that time.
01:19:40	<i>It's easy to see it with hindsight.</i>
01:19:44	Yes.
01:19:45	<i>And what...just talk a bit more about some of the young men you met then, and what was entertainment in Derry for you, as a young girl being taken out and escorted?</i>

Time Code	What is Said
01:19:56	Going for a meal, or going to the cinema...there were two or three cinemas, we used to go there. Not very often, going to dances, but they really just wanted to be...the friends I made just wanted to have a bit of peace, you know, and if you were there, they would always take me out with them out for a meal, or even for a good long walk in the countryside...yes, that's the kind of things they wanted most of all.
01:20:25	<i>And what was it like for you to say goodbye to these young men, when you knew that they were going out again?</i>
01:20:33	Not very funny...you got used to it in the end though, but all of them came back, thank God. All the ones, the friends I knew all came back.
01:20:42	OK, so just tell me, who is this couple that were very nice to you, and was it nice to the WRNS in general?
01:20:47	No, no, it was mainly through the Christian Science church, this is where I met them, and then I took them to the Adairs', and they were always very...made very, very welcome always. There was another Wren who was very friendly with them, and she...through the church as well, and she was a P/O, and...yes.
01:21:11	And how did you know that there was a Christian Science church there?
01:21:15	My father told me. He said, 'Find the Christian Science organisation over there', there was no church as such, he said, 'and that's where you'll find your friends'.
01:21:28	<i>That's nice advice.</i>
01:21:30	Yes....you know what life was like, seventy-odd years ago, it was totally different to where it is today. They were the kind of boyfriends, after going and coming back, and going and coming back, said, 'May I kiss you goodnight?' You know nowadays you have to fight them off after a chip butty, don't you? It was a totally, a totally different world! And also, being so young, I think I was the youngest one on the base, being so young, the other girls, they didn't have to keep an eye on me but you know, they were very concerned about where I went and why.
Start of Film 4	
01:22:10	<i>Do you remember what you ate, as a Wren?</i>
01:22:13	Basic food, yes. Basic food that would get us home. Fish and chips, or a roast meat, and at Christmas they did their best to...because there were all cooks in the WRNS as well, the Quartermaster, Quarter Officer was a very good woman. We had to be in at ten o'clock at night, or ten-thirty if you had a late pass. You really were, you really were looked after...but fortunately, in Derry, being so far from home, when we were off duty, we were allowed to wear civvies all the time except when we were absolutely on, definitely on duty, you had to wear uniform, but we used to wear civvies when we were off duty...and some nights going to Boon Hall, from the road, there was quite a long drive down, the cars on a Friday, Saturday night, it was just, it really was a party...it was wonderful!
01:23:09	<i>Well, I mean, you know...I think I've read that there were like twenty thousand sailors there...there's a local lady population then there's the glamorous Wrens. It's no wonder you were in demand!</i>
01:23:16	But you know, they were lying four abreast, the ships...they were only small ships, corvettes and destroyers and frigates mainly, and yes...it was.
01:23:32	And were these British Navy ships, or were these...
01:23:36	Yes, but...the Navy came back in force when the war ended...but that's something I can tell you about, the U-boats...

Time Code	What is Said
01:23:46	<i>Yes, we'll come onto that. I mean, describe the harbour at Derry, you know, and the amount of merchant ships you'd get in and stuff.</i>
01:23:55	It was very small, I think it's less wide than the River Mersey is. As I say, they were all lined up, there was very little room. There was a bridge over to Ebrington Barracks where we used to have to go for Divisions, and exercise, you know, marching and that kind...we didn't get much of that though, and of course you had to go to church parade once a month, and that was in Derry Cathedral, and they always played the Londonderry Air...and when, at my cremation, I've said, when they're coming out they've got to play the Londonderry Air...when I'm gone.
01:24:35	<i>That's nice. Did you like Divisions then, if you're from Christian Science?</i>
01:24:40	Oh yes, yes, yes. They don't believe in drink or smoking.
01:24:45	<i>Were you a smoker or a drinker?</i>
01:24:47	I...is it off?
01:24:49	<i>No, it's recording.</i>
01:24:50	Well, you can...if you do use anything I've said, you can put it into your own way, can't you? You don't have to do the whole thing, do you?
01:25:03	<i>I'll take little bits out...</i>
01:25:04	Yes, that's what I mean, yes...what was I going to say, I've forgotten!
01:25:07	<i>You were talking about your forty-a-day habit...</i>
01:25:10	Well, I was brought up, 'You will not smoke, you will not drink, and don't bring any little bundles home here!' Life, you know, you were told to be quiet, you were.
01:25:23	<i>But, so did you smoke?</i>
01:25:24	Never...never smoked a cigarette in my life.
01:25:27	<i>Never drank?</i>
01:25:28	No...oh drink? Well only when I was about twenty...and then, well, hardly ever, hardly ever...and I don't drink now. Well, I say don't drink now, most favourite of all is Benedictine in coffee after dinner.
01:25:44	<i>Well, that's what kept you young and alive, I'm sure.</i>
01:25:49	Well, and not having children too, and I've worked always with young people, and I think that keeps you going as well, and I hope I've got a Liverpool sense of humour too!
01:26:02	<i>You have, you have.</i>
01:26:05	I must tell you this...I think I know you well enough to tell you this...when we were issued with our uniforms in Mill Hill, got the shirts, tie, the lot, and we were issued with three pairs of the most appalling bloomers you could ever see, elastic round the waist, legs in them with elastic round the legs, you wouldn't have been seen dead in them...everybody! And we had to keep them, because very, very occasionally there was a kit inspection...but we called them 'Harvest Festivals'...all was safely gathered in! Don't put that...
01:26:44	<i>I'm afraid that will definitely be in... Did you learn about, you know the Canadians and Americans that you were seeing a lot of, did they talk about what they were transporting? Did you have a sense of the significance of a convoy through what you learned?</i>

Time Code	What is Said
01:27:04	Well as Churchill said, it was the one battle he was terrified of losing, because if we'd lost the Battle of the Atlantic, we would have been finished, and they were bringing over foodstuffs and ammunition, that kind of thing. On the little ships, with the escorts, there was nothing, it was just the ship itself and the men on it, guarding the convoys.
01:27:28	<i>Who were the Canadians that you were meeting then, these were the guys on the escort ships?</i>
01:27:31	Yes, yes.
01:27:32	<i>Ah, I didn't realise. So there was a Canadian Navy, helping the escort?</i>
01:27:37	The Canadian Navy did a very great deal. You don't hear about it as much but yes, they were all Canadians...on the <i>St Thomas</i> and the <i>Humber Stone</i> , all those ships.
01:27:54	<i>Talk to me about what's next on your list, because I've kind of exhausted my standard questions, and I might have some others.</i>
01:28:00	I've got, on the top, about the bombs and why it wasn't...
01:28:07	<i>Let me ask you about that then, because actually Derry, one of, the pictures of Derry are of a city, you know, almost like a party city, with balloons all over the place...</i>
01:28:19	No we didn't even have those, only in Liverpool...but in Derry, there was never an air raid, and I can't imagine why, except that four miles was the Free State, and when the ships went out, they went past the Donegal coast, so they knew when the convoys were coming and going.
	Start of Film 5
01:28:39	<i>How did it feel to be part of something like the Official Secrets Act during the war, did it...?</i>
01:28:46	Well this is why I say, I was too young to appreciate the good job I'd got, you know, you were sworn to secrecy, and then everything that came in code, you either gave it to the Wrens or if it was in figures, or the other way round, the officers did it. No officers lived with us, only the Quartermaster Officer, you know, the lady in charge of us all.
01:29:14	<i>Would you know individual ships on the convoy, or would you just know of a specific numbered convoy?</i>
01:29:21	A specific number...do you mean the convoy itself, the merchant ships and everything? No, we never knew how big the convoys were.
01:29:30	<i>So every, every, sort of, you know, might be three or four corvettes would go out of Derry and they'd just be on Convoy 10...</i>
01:29:37	Yes, yes...
01:29:38	<i>...and you'd know that Convoy 10 would go out and Convoy 10 would come back.</i>
01:29:42	Yes, yes...but they'd come into Liverpool, or Glasgow, these big ships...must have been pretty horrible coming in when Liverpool was being bombed, to see them coming back in, mustn't it? They were hard days, weren't they? Most significant thing is when the war ended, British ships went to Norway and brought back some of the U-boats, and they were berthed further up Loch Foyle, quite near Derry, and fortunately...unfortunately, that day I was on duty, I wasn't allowed to go and see them coming in, and the CinC of Western Approaches was Admiral Sir Max Horton, who was a splendid man, and I'm told, I didn't see this happen, but I'm told when this captain of the U-boats, one of the U-boats, came off the ship, put out his hand, and Max Horton just stood there...wouldn't shake his hand. Then I went on a U-boat, and they were pretty grim, water dripping off them and rusty, then when the war ended, all of them were taken out into the north of the Irish Sea and scuttled.

Time Code	What is Said
01:30:55	<i>Yeah, what do...did you meet some of the Germans, the sailors that were on the U-boats?</i>
01:31:02	No, no.
01:31:03	<i>They'd been taken off?</i>
01:31:05	Yes, yes.
01:31:07	<i>Quite a sinister thing to have got into, I'd have thought.</i>
01:31:12	Yes, yes. Yes, you must...I mean, dreadful though they were, it's awful when you think of being down there, being depth-charged, it's a pretty terrible death.
01:31:21	<i>Were you impacted by the war, personally...you know, did you suffer at the time, emotionally, anything happen to you?</i>
01:31:32	No, I came through with all my family still alive, and no damage. Looking back, I think I should have stayed in the WRNS, I think it would have suited me. I'd have ended up a crusty old P/O, giving them hell!
01:31:49	<i>Why did you come out?</i>
01:31:51	Well because I'd met my husband, who was on one of the ships that went to Norway to bring the U-boats back to Ireland, and I married in '48.
01:32:04	<i>You know, what do you remember of the end of the war and VE day, and then what happened next for you?</i>
01:32:10	There wasn't a great deal happening, I mean like in London, it was absolutely wonderful why everybody went mad...everybody was very pleased, and we were in Derry and there were concerts and dances, that kind of thing, but much quieter, much quieter. They didn't really...the population didn't really, you know, they'd never been bombed. I think once, bombs were dropped on them, but only once, ever, which is something that always amazed me.
01:32:42	<i>So you feel that they, sort of, apart from the fact that their city was overtaken by sailors, they were aloof to the armed...the war?</i>
01:32:51	Yes, a lot of them...not all of them, obviously, because lots of, lots of men from over the border came over to this country and joined the forces.
01:33:02	<i>And the demob process, what do you remember of it, and what did you do next?</i>
01:33:09	Well I went for the Signals Officer, until my time came to go, and I think I got 29 pound for my...and you went home in your uniform, and that was it, but I don't... it was missing your friends, all the other girls were going bit by bit, you know, the older ones went sort of before me, the ones that had been in longer than me seemed to go out before me, which was fair enough, but...no, it was, it was, I was very sad that it was over, but that's very... not a nice thing to say when so many people suffered so badly in the war.
01:33:49	<i>And you reflect on your Wren time now?</i>
01:33:54	Only recently, only recently...I joined the WRNS Association this summer. I didn't know...there was one many, many years ago in Chester, and then about four months ago there was a WRNS Association in Chester, and I went and joined, and I went for our Christmas lunch yesterday, and I was a bit scared I was going to be the oldest one there! One lady beats me! But it's amazing how, it's so easy to talk about the old days, and everyone, everyone, you can speak, speak well of it, how they loved it, how they wouldn't have missed a day of it. I never knew anybody who was unhappy...oh, perhaps if their boyfriend wasn't there or something, he'd been moved perhaps somewhere else, or didn't come into Derry any more, or he was perhaps in the Army or the Air Force, but in the main, yes.

Time Code	What is Said
01:34:55	<i>All right, well I think we've probably...that's about it Joan.</i>
01:34:58	Is it of use to you?
01:34:59	<i>Nah...I'm going to bin it! No, it was a lovely interview...thank you.</i>
01:35:07	End of Films