

Transcript of Audio Clip with Jean Gordon

Interviewer: Can you remember the day that war was declared, on 3rd of September 1939?

Jean: Well, the most vividest things that I do remember was that there was a lot of preparations for what was to be expected and my mother, who was the great organiser, and my grandmother, who was quite elderly then, was very nervous and I think I would have had this sort of degree of, oh what's it all about, you see. But the most vivid memory was on the night of the day that war was declared we had gone to bed but then the air raid siren went off. I was quite familiar with that because they'd had several runs of playing it over so that people knew. My mother said 'Come on quick. Out of bed! Get dressed! We must go to the air raid shelter.' Now the air raid shelter in Ramsgate then was, we had to go down some steps and then along the seafront to, what was then, the railway station and the tunnels that came under the cliffs were where you went for air raid shelter. They subsequently closed off but there's no longer a railway there. But those tunnels, I believe, can be looked at. Anyway, I got up and got dressed quickly and my grandmother, as I say, was older and my mother kept saying to her, 'Come on. Come on. Hurry up mum'. My grandmother was saying, 'But I haven't done me hair yet'. She always went out with her hair, each side she would plait into a ring around each ear and that was the fashion from way back but she still did it. My mother got so crossed. Anyway, by the time we would have been ready to go out the all-clear sounded and whatever happened it was a total false alarm [laughs].