



## Jill Taylor, Wartime recollections CEO's choice award

I was six and my brother 18 months, Second World War was about to break out. As my father worked for an American Company. I could have spent the war there, but my parents decided against it. Just as well. Many ships were lost in the Atlantic. Our house contents were put in store.

Dad had to stay in Manchester and mum, brother and I were evacuated with the school, by train to Castleton in Derbyshire. There we gathered in the local hall waiting to be sent to villagers' homes. The local butcher didn't want tiny ones, so we finally went to a farm on the edge of the village. Mum wasn't happy there and later dad found a brick-built bungalow on a Holiday Estate just outside Rhyl, North Wales. Here we spent the rest of the war.

We were provided with gas masks and because my brother was tiny, he had to have a cradle style. Mum grew vegetables in the back garden and with the help of a young lad they dug up worms on the beach to bait a sunken line. At low tide, collected dabs and whiting. Some were sent to grandparents in London. Also found cockles on the beach. Lovely tomatoes were bought locally from a Guernsey family. Rationing- no bananas, oranges scarce. Only found washed up on the shoreline but too salty. Other food was bought with Ration Books.

Mum made Easter Eggs with condensed milk and cocoa powder. Dried sliced apples as a form of preserving. Also saved fresh eggs by immersing them in Isinglass. We gathered rose hips from the lanes and the school sent them away to make Rose Hip Syrup (full of vitamin C ). Only saw dad every other weekend.

Some London relations came to stay for a break from the London bombing. We had a few stray bombs and mum saw a glow in the sky when Manchester and Liverpool had heavy bombing. Schooling was in the church hall in Towyn, all ages up to 11 years. Then onto Abergele High School, where I learnt Welsh. Depending on the weather, we walked along the beach or up in the local hills. School meals started up. The beach was very close to us where they put in large poles and cement pyramids to prevent any landings.

As life became a little easier mum took us to a Theatre and a just opened Amusement Park. Our presents were second hand and books made of wartime paper. I still have my bracelet with my identity number on it. Later used as our National Insurance number. In 1945 we returned to south Manchester. Our stored furniture survived but the toys etc. were too young for us.

As I write more memories come back to me, another time may be. A little different to 'Lockdown' but we remembered and survived.