

Joyce Emily Sherwood
nee Callow with tributes
by her sister Gwen
Milton and her daughter
JoAnn Bell
English War Bride
Aquitania
April 10, 1947



I was one of three children, one sister and one brother. I grew up in Penge, England. Bombs dropped frequently, and air raid sirens went every night. Penge was bombed more than any other area in England. I remember when the sirens went off, we all went to the Anderson Shelters until the all-clear was sounded.

I worked as a conductor on the buses during the war. I was introduced to my Canadian husband-to-be (William James Sherwood R.C.A. C100060) by my cousin. She was married to a Canadian, and they were friends of Bill. I went out with him till he was shipped out to go home. We wrote to each other, he asked me to marry him, and I said yes.

I left England on Friday, April 3, 1947 aboard the S.S. Cunard Aquitania. We arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia on April 10, 1947. The journey took a week. I didn't get sick, so I considered myself lucky. I opened my purse by the rail to check my ticket and it flew away in the wind. I remember the purser on the ship was very helpful and got me another ticket. I was 20 years old when I came to Canada. I was excited to leave, to



be with the person of my dreams, but it was also a sad time too because I had to leave my family.

The train ride from Halifax to Montreal was very long. It was dark and the scenery was desolate. My husband-to-be, Bill Sherwood, had told me he would meet me under the clock in the station in Montreal. Neither of us realized there were 2 clocks, one at each end. After standing and waiting for hours with no one showing up, I went to the family aid, an organization we had been advised to seek out if we had any problems. They took me to the Y, got in contact with Bill and he returned the next day to get me. We still have a laugh about that today!

After Bill picked me up, we stayed at his brother's house for a couple of days, then we went to his mother's and met his family. What a different life! They lived in the country, just north west of Brockville, near Crosby, Ontario. They had an outside toilet, so when I needed to use it, I made



Bill go with me. I saw my first live chickens, meat hanging in the well-house, you had to pump your water from a well and the only hot water was heated on the wood stove. It was so cold in the winter that when you did the wash and hung the clothes out to dry, they froze stiff. I was always amazed at how they were dry when you brought them in.

Bill and I were married on April 15, 1947 at St. John's Church in Smiths Falls.

The language barrier was something, I couldn't understand why my mother-in-law disliked me. I had written home to say that she was a very homely person, homely in England meant you were very home oriented, here it meant ugly!

Bill worked on construction so we moved around a lot. We settled in Brockville, Ontario in 1951. He built our home in 1954, where I lived for the next 48 years. Bill started his own construction company, which is still operated by our son today. We raised 4 children, 2 sons and 2 daughters.

We had 9 grandchildren and I have 1 great-grandchild and 2 more on the way. Bill passed away in April 1985, but I remained in our house for another 10 years after that. Family was a major part of our lives. We didn't belong to any organized groups, but I

had a number of close friends in my neighbourhood that I got together with weekly.

After I left England in 1947, I didn't see my family for 14 years. There was no phone then, so you wrote letters. Unfortunately that was something I didn't take the time to keep up. I returned in May of 1961, taking my youngest daughter JoAnn, who was 7 at the time. That would be the last time I saw my Mum. She passed away a couple of years later.

My life in Canada has been far better than I ever envisioned. I am a Canadian Citizen and very proud of it. I have been lucky enough to return to England to visit a number of times.

SAYING GOODBYE

Gwen Milton, sister of Joyce Sherwood (Callow)

Our local train took us to Waterloo Station in London where my sister was going to embark on a long journey, first to Southampton dock, then to catch a ship to Canada. There were just 3 of us, our mother, Joyce and I. While waiting for the train, there were lots of laughs and light banter. The train arrived and we said our goodbyes and then the guard blew his whistle.

Sadness came when we all realized this might be the last time to see each other (as it was) 14 years were to go by before she was to see us again.

Mum and I watched till we could see her no more. Our mother did not cry until the train had gone out of sight. Joyce had left us a letter which we read on our local train home. The saying is (Life must go on), but Mum really missed Joyce.

The years between have been kind, we have visited Canada many times, Joyce has been over many times, but sadly our Mum died many years ago.

MY MOM

from JoAnn Bell (daughter)

I never really thought about my Mom being a war-bride until recently. We sometimes sit and reminisce about the war times in England and how her emigrating to Canada came about. Ashley, my daughter, wrote a history paper for grade 12 all about her life in the war years and about her being a war-bride. Mom always has a memory for us. After my daughter left for the University of New Brunswick (a 12 hour drive away) at 19 years of age, I thought about how my Mom would have left her

whole family around that age to meet some guy she had met from a strange country far across the ocean. It makes me think of how brave she was to have adventured so far, maybe that's where my daughter gets her sense of adventure. My mom brought some great attributes with her from England. Her work ethic, love for crafts of all kinds, but especially her talent in knitting is a real treasure. Not everyone's mom can knit like that! Because of her frequent trips back, she hasn't really lost her accent either. She has been a dedicated mother, mother-in-law, and grandmother; helping out when she could. She is Nan to everyone who meets her.

She has always been proud to be a Canadian, but loves to go "home" when she can. Unfortunately, there were quite a few years when they couldn't afford for her to go home, and she has some regrets about that.

After seeing the PIER 21 website, I decided to get her story included. For Christmas 2003, our family is making a donation to the Wall of Honour, having her name engraved on a brick to remember forever that part of history. My husband and I took Mom to Pier 21 in May of 2004. We had a wonderful tour of the museum and Mom's memories are now recorded in the oral history collection.