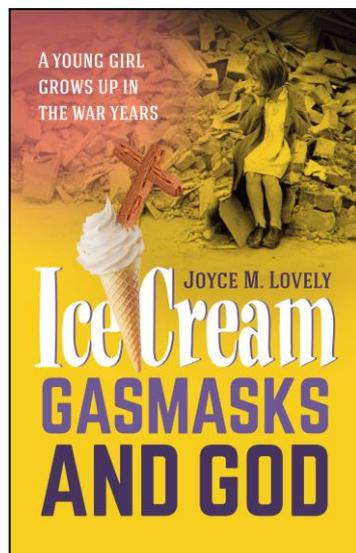


MEREO NEW BOOK: PRESS RELEASE

A funny, touching and heart-warming portrait of war time and beyond
PUBLICATION DATE: 22 June 2015



Ice Cream, Gas Masks and God A young girl grows up in the war years

'Humour, tenacity, sharing and resourcefulness, especially by the women on the home front, kept life normal for us children. We laughed, cried, hoped and dreamed, but we never asked for more than what we knew was around us.'

By Joyce M Lovely



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'I sat stunned. First I felt the pricking of tears, and then I began to laugh. There lay my ancient, despised, childhood World War II gasmask. It rested there staring at me eerily, the eyepiece still displaying the oval sickly-brown cellophane, which wasn't even cracked. I sat back. My eyes closed, and the memories streamed back...'

Fascinating, funny and gloriously nostalgic, *Ice Cream, Gas Masks and God* is the author's trip down memory lane to 1940s Liverpool, where early reminiscences include not just the hated gas mask, but also the regular night time spells in the air raid shelter as the bombs fell.

A beautifully drawn portrait of the place and its people, from Calder High School Joyce went on to work at the Eagle Star Insurance Company and the office of the Dunlop Rubber Factory. Missing out on being one of the first to see The Beatles perform at the Cavern Club (because she didn't fancy the sound of them from her sister's description!), she moved to London to study Nursing at St Bartholomew's. Marriage took her on to the Shetland Islands - where life as a parson's wife meant that prayer was sometimes relied upon to provide dinner - and then to the West Riding of Yorkshire, before finally settling in Maine, USA.

A natural storyteller, Joyce's recollections of people, places and events are effortlessly recounted. From the exotic neighbour who had been in the German Resistance (but whose priority was now pudding) to her splendid Spirella Corsetier grandmother, *Ice Cream, Gas Masks and God* is a gentle, humorous and warm personal history, rich in colour and detail.

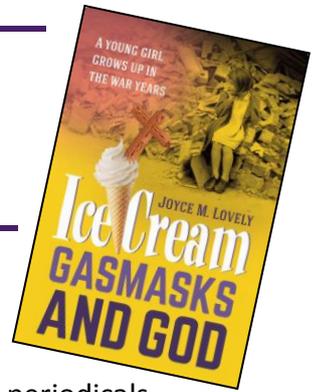
"Jerry made one heck of a mess here, didn't he?" said Dad. "And all my best willow pattern china has been smashed" Mum sniffed, trying not to cry again. Dad put his arm around her. "Don't worry, love. We'll get through this." And we did, even though I heard a few days later that eight people had been killed in their air-raid shelters, along with many others, including some in the public shelters. Much later I learned that 2000 Liverpoolians had been killed in just that week, with thousands more injured and homeless.

Please see over for photos and further information about the author >>>>>

MEREO BOOKS PRESS RELEASE CONTINUED

Ice Cream, Gas Masks and God

By Joyce M Lovely



About the author:

Born in Liverpool, **Joyce M Lovely** now lives in Maine, USA. She has had numerous articles and stories published in magazines and periodicals and she is a member of a writing group. Joyce worked in education for many years, as a teacher and then later in administration, working with teachers and leading workshops.

"I remember vividly growing up in Liverpool, amidst air raids, bombs and gasmasks. My story is from a childhood perspective, leaving the grown-ups to worry about battles and shortages. We observed strict morals as a teenager in the fifties, yet still had boyfriends, stolen kisses and fun. This memoir concludes with my marriage to a minister and our adventures in the distant Shetland Islands. Here I experienced the islanders' expectations of 'yon minister's wife' often resulting in unexpected humorous consequences..."



Media opportunities:

Extracts/serialisation. The author is available for telephone and/or email interviews and to write articles.

UK Local Interest:

- Liverpool and Merseyside • London • Shetland Islands

Feature suggestions:

- With the events this summer to mark 70th anniversary of the end of WW2, memoirs such as this have a special resonance
- The child's eye view of war: What do your readers/listeners/viewers recall of this time?
- Faith and its impact: Joyce's description of faith is rooted in humanity and humility. What are your readers/listeners/viewers experiences of faith? How do they define it?
- Writing your memoirs: How easy or difficult is recording your life? Is it a cathartic experience or does it have the potential to open old wounds and woes?



To request a review copy of either book, further information or to be put in touch with the author, please contact **Vicky Edwards** vicky@ellydonovan.co.uk tel: 0777 189 0854 www.ellydonovan.co.uk