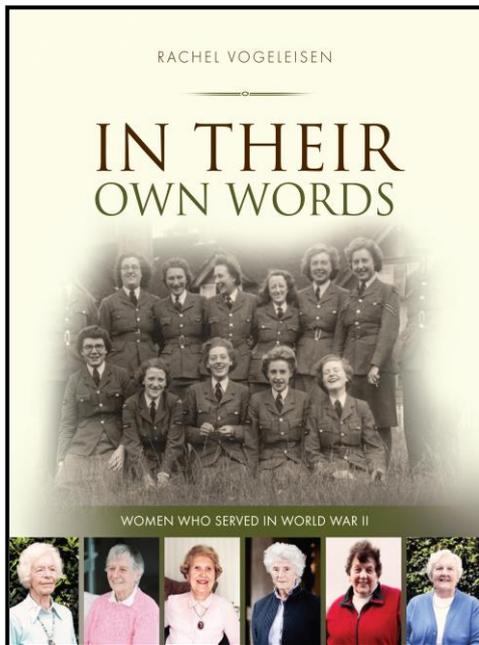


**MEREO NEW BOOK: PRESS RELEASE**  
**PORTRAITS OF THE WOMEN WHO WON THE WAR**  
**PUBLICATION DATE: 19 October 2015**



**IN THEIR OWN WORDS**  
**WOMEN WHO SERVED IN WORLD WAR II**

*“I was not allowed to tell my family about my role at Bletchley Park until the 1970s, as I was bound by the Official Secrets Act. There was absolute secrecy surrounding our work. When we were trained, we were told not to ask questions; do what you’re told, do this, that and the other, and don’t ask why.”*

**By Rachel Voegeleisen**



ISBN: 978-1-86151-394-6 Paperback 150 pages RRP: £12.99  
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[www.mereobooks.com](http://www.mereobooks.com) Mereo books are available through:  
Amazon.co.uk & other internet booksellers and all good bookshops  
(Also available as an ebook)

*“My only interest in flying was through my boyfriends; all were pilots in training. No one flew before the war unless they were very wealthy. Where we are in this part of the country, we are surrounded by airfields; Little Rissington, Aston Down and Kemble. I was reading The Aeroplane, a monthly magazine, still going, and it said that the ATA had run out of qualified pilots and they were training ab initio. I applied and got in; at the time I didn’t even drive a car!”*

A professional photographer specialising in portraits, Rachel Voegeleisen’s fascination with the Second World War was sparked by her childhood discovery that her grandfather found himself having to fight for the Germans against Russia. The culmination of ten years of research, *In Their Own Words* is a collection of portraits and testimonials recording the experiences of twenty-one women who volunteered during World War II. Interviewed by Rachel, the accounts have been left as far as possible in the women’s original words, so that their voices can be heard clearly and faithfully.



**Detailing their extraordinary work, much of it behind the scenes, the women featured in this book are among many whose incredible efforts went unrecognised. It was not until 2005 that their contribution to the war effort was recognised with a memorial dedicated to the women of World War Two in Whitehall, London.**

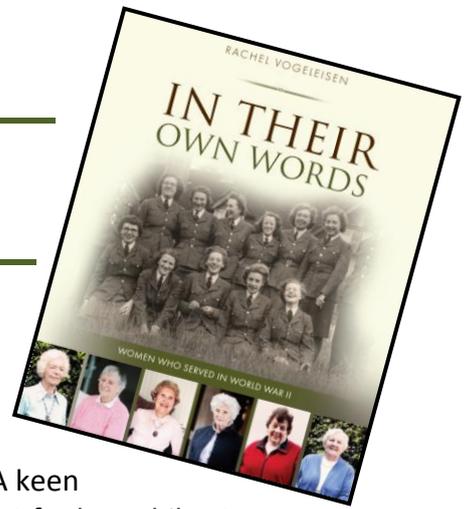
Including accounts from those who served in the ATS, ATA, WRNS, WAAF and as members of the Land Army, these women are some of the last alive to speak about their wartime experiences. A piece of history captured forever, *In Their Own Words* is also a celebration of women in old age – their wisdom, wit, warmth and fortitude.

*“My sister broke one Spitfire; she tried to land with a crosswind, a tyre blew off and she touched with the undercarriage, but she said, “All I broke is a fingernail!” “*

**Please see over for further information about the author >>>>>**

## MEREO BOOKS PRESS RELEASE CONTINUED

### In Their Own Words By Rachel Vogeleisen



#### About the author:

**Rachel Vogeleisen** was born in Alsace, France. A keen history student, World War II was a strong subject for her while at school – *“but I can't remember my history books mentioning the role of women once! How could we imagine a country at complete stand still because the men were called to war? The Women who choose to get involved wanted to do their bit for the country; they felt it was their role to help. I wanted to meet these women, hear their stories and give them some recognition. This book will tell you some of their stories and give you a glimpse of how they are still standing proud today.”*

Rachel is a photographer. She lives in Ealing, London.

#### Media opportunities:

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

#### UK Local Interest:

- The women featured in this book come from **all over the UK**. Many trained at **Ainsworth (Gloucestershire)** and some flew Spitfires from **The Hamble**.
- The author is based in **Ealing, London**.

#### Feature suggestions:

- With the events this summer being held to mark 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the final end of World War II (VJ Day), and with publication coinciding with Remembrance events, recollections such as those contained in Rachel's book have a special resonance
- The role of women in the war: What do your readers/listeners/viewers recall of this time?
- Fear and loss: The women who served lived and worked through one of the most terrible wars in history. How did they cope? What emotional scars did it leave? What are your readers/listeners/viewers experiences?
- Recording memories for posterity: How important is it to compile accounts and to pass the past on to the next generation?



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](mailto:vicky@ellydonovan.co.uk) tel: 0777 189 0854  
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