

Introducing In Someone Else's Shoes

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- Sidney Tagg Foster (letter reading)

- My Youth was spent in a street.

Jurgen Schwiening spent his early childhood in Greater Hannover

- One of the main differences between the time today and that time was that one lived in isolation. The street you lived in that was your world. To cope with the demands of ordinary life and so on it kept you busy enough and in any case the perspective of a child is very different from that of an adult. An adult will worry about tomorrow and where to get this and that and that and that. As a child you don't worry about those things, you take each day as it comes.

During the war his street was no longer safe...*(Sound fx of British news broadcast about bombing during WW2)*

- Partly because of the dangers of bombing you didn't go out much ... *(continued sound fx from British news broadcast)* The school which I went to was bombed and then our school was transferred to another school which was also bombed out so we didn't get any school reports then for about 2 years ... *(Sound fx of air raid sirens)* October 44 we were bombed out here so in the cellar in the house. We were then evacuated, billeted onto a farm into rooms that were never meant to be lived in and so we lived there in fact for 10 years from 44 to 54.

Martin Jefferd visited Hannover 30 years later and heard what the allied bombs had done.

- We were told that after the war there were just 4 major buildings left in Hannover. 1 was the Rathouse which is the big town hall and 3 others. They showed you models of it and it was so badly destroyed that the city elders were thinking of abandoning the whole site and building elsewhere.
- I do remember walking through the streets where collapsed buildings and piles rubble right for left on every path you know on streets where you had to go through. When my grandparents came to join us because they were also bombed out and they were bombed out a second time in Hannover we went with a handcart to Hannover from the village to try and collect whatever was useable in the rubble and in the cellar. The horror and deprivation set in after 45 when the German administration collapsed, reparations were taking hold of the country. There was starvation and hunger

Children in Bristol knew what being bombed was like and heard the news of the terrible conditions in Hannover after the war. *(German news reel 1947)*

- What kept us alive particularly children was Foodspeisen. Food was served in schools in our case actually Swedish organisations feeding German children after the war or maybe a year and a half or so they took a dish with you into school and it was always soup.

A child's letter in the Evening Post

- We are very sorry that your town has been badly bombed and we know that in winter you have very bad weather, so we have collected many gifts so that you can go to school and perhaps to Sunday School.

The gifts from the children of Bristol were a drop in the ocean, but their symbolism began a friendship between our cities that has lasted a lifetime.

- We hope it will soon be repaired and gradually built up again and when we grow up and you grow up, there will be peace between Germany and our Isles.