

Elsie Mabel Kennedy

My name is Elsie Mabel Kennedy and I was born on the 25/05/1909. I lived for the entire duration of World War 2 on a farm south of Cunderdin. Several miles from the farm was the Yundegin School and it was here that I commenced spotting aircraft as a member of the Voluntary Air Observer Corps. For two years I joined a band of farmers and their wives who were rostered on to report the movements of any aircraft.

After two years the group was disbanded and I did the job alone from our farm for a further two years. I had to ring directly through to the Head Office in York, give my secret code name and report on the appearance, altitude and flight direction of any aircraft flying overhead. It was during this time that I recorded seeing the first four-engine plane to be seen in this area. Every few months, officers would visit the farm to see how I was getting on with my job of aircraft spotting.

In between this voluntary work I was rearing two very young children, bred and reared chickens, made butter and cooked for three Italian prisoners of war, all in a house without electricity and running water. As well I would help my husband with farm work when needed.

I established a small exporting business with eggs. I sent eggs to England and received the sum of 7 pence per dozen for my efforts.

These were very hard years with rationing, especially petrol which was vital to farmers who lived miles from town.