



IWM marks the 75th Anniversary of clothes rationing with [#WhatMyFamilyWore](#)

1 June 2016, marks the 75th Anniversary of the announcement of clothes rationing in Second World War Britain.

Imperial War Museums are encouraging people across the nation to mark this anniversary and the ingenious fashion of the era, by digging deep into their family albums or speaking to parents and Grandparents to discover what their family wore at the time – and by sharing these photographs and stories across social media using [#WhatMyFamilyWore](#).

Many of the contributions to the [#WhatMyFamilyWore](#) initiative will be shown as part of the exhibition experience for *Fashion on the Ration; 1940's Street Style*, IWM North's newly opened show. *Fashion on the Ration* explores how fashion survived and even flourished under the strict rules of rationing and how despite the restrictions, austerity did not put an end to creative design or fashionable trends on the British home front. The designs of the era are still celebrated today, with a growing community of people who wear and make clothes inspired by these war time trends.

Diane Lees, Director General of IWM said: "[#WhatMyFamilyWore](#) is a great way to get people from different generations talking and sharing stories and photographs that show how people had to make do and be creative with what little they had during the Second World War. IWM North's exhibition *Fashion on the Ration* tells some wonderful stories – underwear made from a silk map, a bridesmaid's dress made from parachute material and stylish wedge heeled shoes made from scraps picked up from a factory floor. We hope that [#WhatMyFamilyWore](#) will bring forward more of these fantastic stories of creativity in times of restrictions."

Share your Second World War family photos online

- **Twitter** at @IWMNorth
- **Facebook** at facebook.com/iwmnorth
- **Instagram** at instagram.com/imperialwarmuseums

Use the hashtag [#WhatMyFamilyWore](#)

Fashion on the Ration: 1940s Street Style runs from 27 May 2016 – 1 May 2017 at IWM North. There will be a major series of events including a Fashion on the Ration Weekender on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 June and an *In Conversation* event with fashion designer Wayne Hemingway and journalist Lucy Siegle on Fashion and Sustainability on 5 October.

Tickets are now available online at iwm.org.uk

The exhibition is kindly supported by Little Greene Paint Company and Metrolink.

Julie Summers, author of *Fashion on the Ration* book and *Jambusters*, the inspiration behind popular TV show *Homefires*, has taken part in #Whatmyfamilywore . She shared a photo of her grandmother with her mother and two uncles, taken in Wales in 1945.



Julie said: "My grandmother, or Ga as I used to call her, only ever wore slacks on holiday as you can see in this pictures. She normally wore a tweed skirt which she would regularly rotate throughout the day so as not to wear it down in one section."

Julie's grandfather, Philip Toosey, was the Lieutenant Colonel who was the man who led the construction of the Bridge on the River Kwai, later becoming the inspiration for the character of Lieutenant Colonel Nicholson play by Alec Guinness in the 1957 film.

Julie explained: "The family holiday picture she my mum Gillian, my uncle Patrick (back row) and my uncle Nicholas. The photo was taken in August 1945 but my dad only came home from war in the November. My Uncle Patrick, who was the eldest, was the only one of us who recognised his dad when he came home. In fact for my uncle Nicholas it was the first time he had met him."

Amber Butchart, Fashion historian, is taking part in #WhatMyFamilyWore and has found this picture of her Grandfather Tom and Grandmother Emily. Tom was an engineer in the RAF and sadly died during the Second World War. This photograph was taken on their wedding day in North London, 1940.



IWM's Charlotte Czyzyk is taking part in #WhatMyFamilyWore and has found a selection of photos showing the fashions and work wear in the North West at the time. The first photograph shows Charlotte's Great Aunt Lily and Gladys. They both worked in the Co-operative Wholesale Society Lard Refinery and Margarine Works in Irlam in 1939. The second photograph shows Gladys and her husband Harry Beswick who married in 1943 and honeymooned in Blackpool. Harry was in a reserved occupation as a builder and also served as an ARP Warden on the Home Front.



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Notes to Editors

IWM

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM's five branches are **IWM London**, IWM's flagship branch with six floors of exhibitions and displays; **IWM North**, housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; **IWM Duxford**, a world renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; **Churchill War Rooms**, housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser **HMS Belfast**.

First World War Centenary

2014 - 2018 marks the centenary of the First World War, a landmark anniversary for Britain and the world. IWM will mark the centenary by leading a vibrant, four year programme of cultural activities across the country, including the opening of brand new First World War galleries at IWM London in 2014. For more information visit www.1914.org