

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Kelly Ann Sproul

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VR2-V-L-2011-023

Kelly Ann Sproul, known as the Sweetheart of the British Forces due to her portrayal as a 1940s version singer and dancer entertaining World War II veterans, was interviewed along with Vincent Speranza on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: June 15, 2011 Location: IL Information Service studio, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Technical Support: Videographers Mark Suszko, Tony Bateman, and Greg Lipe,
Illinois Information Service

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, Massachusetts

Edited by: Betty Workman and Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteer

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Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on July 1, 2011.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Kelly Ann Sproul, *Veterans Remember*, VR2-V-L-2011-023

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Kelly Ann Sproul was born on March 24th, 1988 in West Ham, a borough of London, England. She grew up in Kent, England with her mother (her Mum), hearing lullabies of World War II vintage songs, and regaled by the stories of the blitz of London from her maternal grandparents. At an early age she knew she wanted to be a singer and dancer, and after secondary school (equivalent of high school in the United States) she was given an opportunity to translate her interests into a career. The Prince's Trust, a charity for youths founded by Prince Charles, offered Kelly a small loan to start a business that would combine her love of the theater and entertaining with her equally strong love of vintage World War II music and dance.

In 2006 she began her career as a musical therapist, going to nursing homes and other institutions singing to the residents, many with dementia or other serious diseases. She soon had an offer to perform at a veterans group, and after that experience knew she had found her calling. Kelly continues her work in musical therapy, but also has performed at many veterans events, especially for World War II veterans. In 2009 she was invited to perform in Bastogne, Belgium at the 65th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. It was there she met Vincent Speranza, a 101st Division paratrooper and veteran of the battle. A year later they met again at Bastogne, and in the spring of 2011 Vince met Kelly and her mother in England while he traveled there. At the time of this interview, Vince was serving as Kelly's host in the United States, and participated in the interview. (See also Vincent Speranza's interview, part of the *Veterans Remember* project.)

Subject Headings/Key Words: musical therapy; West Ham, London, England; Kent, England; Prince's Trust; Prince Charles, Prince of Wales; London Taxi Association; 'Band of Brothers' theme song; Bastogne, Belgium; Folkestone Normandy Veterans Branch; Vincent Speranza

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