

1.

PIANO - SHORT INTRODUCTION

~~Most~~ Most of my life - as wife, mother, nurse and entertainer has been connected with the piano - and some of my deepest memories are ~~connected with music~~ ^{musical ones}. I have sung, played ~~the~~ music of the composers I love - and, when all that has not been enough I've made up my own

PIANO - IMPROVISATIONS - ORIGINAL COMPOSITION

I think, very often, of that period of crisis - the Second World War. I recall one night in London when I was preparing to play the piano in a hotel. ~~Then~~ An air-raid siren went - and seconds later a bomb burst a few doors away. After the bang I sat there petrified. My face went as white as the piano keys, ~~white~~ Black smoke poured in over the piano from the fractured windows of the hotel. Some minutes later two burly wardens came in to see how we were. The all clear went - I managed a faint smile - the two wardens took off their helmets, and, dusting off the debris we all sang a few noisy choruses. We started with the Old Kent Road

PIANO - OLD KENT ROAD - SIDE BY SIDE- KNEES UP MOTHER BROWN - THE BELLS ARE RINGING

I arrived at a military camp one afternoon to find a huge audience but no piano. My stage was a large truck. Then I heard a few shouts of 'make way damn you - and several soldiers marched through the audience with a piano with no legs. They placed it on the truck on two boxes and then brought a third for me to sit on. I sang until I was tired and then as the sun began to set I played some of my favourite tunes, and improvised as I went.

PIANO - RAMONA - WONDERFUL ONE (soft and slow)

Some time later I arrived back in London about eight in the morning after a dreadful train journey. There had been air-raids as usual and broken glass lay everywhere. It had been raining and to complicate

matters the Germans had hit a factory nearby that made feather pillows. ~~The feathers were everywhere~~ - and slick city Londoners with bowler hats and tightly rolled umbrellas covered with feathers tried to pretend that nothing unusual was happening. I just couldn't help laughing out loud and thinking of the song I sang to some Americans the day before - Yankee Doodle Dandy

PIANO - IMPROVISE ON YANKEE DOODLE DANDY -

There were so many babies born during the war that the few nursing homes were full and my nursing ability took me to a hotel on the outskirts of London. The babies were twins. One day they went off to sleep in their cots and I started a well-earned rest. I woke up to the sound of air-raid sirens and babies screaming. Their mother was out so I had to cope on my own. I remembered being told to go to the cellars if the Sirens went, so, with a baby under each arm I found my way to the cellar, ~~and the smell of beer that soaked from~~ ~~it~~. I looked around and saw gas pipes - crates of spirits and ~~beer~~ barrels of beer. I thought - goodness - if a bomb hits here I'll be either gassed or drowned in alcohol. So, with the babies screaming their heads off I sought sanctuary elsewhere and found my way to the piano.

A I gave the babies a bottle each and then played the piano. I knew Brahms Lullaby and what I didn't know I made up. Then I added another tune for good measure

PIANO- BRAHM'S LULLABY - I'LL WALK BESIDE YOU

I expect many of you have seen DAD'S ARMY on television. I remember one Dad with a baby in London's underground during the war. We used these underground stations as shelters. One could hardly move at times. Tonight was one of those nights. This old Dad - surrounded by children was methodically washing a small baby - head - middle - bottom, while one of the other children held the water in a leaking carrier-bag.

leg. As he finished amid the silent admiration of all around - I heard a young French soldier nearby say - Ces't La Vie - it is life. It was a long night and the underground was cold. I spoke for a long time in French to the soldier - as my mother had been French and it was a second language to me. The soldier told me about a singer he loved and his favourite song. The music was LA VIE EN ROSE, and ^{the} singer Edith Piaf - a popular singer in Paris

PIANO - LA VIE EN ROSE