

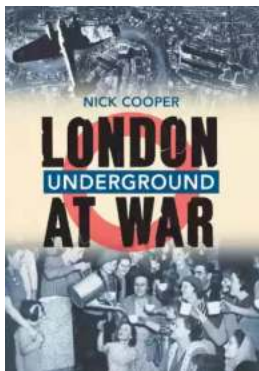
London Underground At War: The Inspiring Story of Susie Johns

The London Underground has always been an iconic symbol of the city's transportation system. However, during times of war, its role extended far beyond that of a mere transport network. The tunnels beneath the bustling metropolis became a sanctuary, a shelter, and even a lifeline for Londoners during some of the darkest days in the city's history.

One name that stands out when talking about the London Underground during World War II is that of Susie Johns. A remarkable woman, Johns played a vital role in helping the underground system function during the challenging times of war.

The Early Years

Susie Johns was born in London in 1907. From a young age, she displayed a keen interest in engineering and spent hours tinkering with machinery. It was this passion that led her to pursue a career in electrical engineering, a field dominated by men at the time.



London Underground at War by Susie Johns(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

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Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 216 pages
Lending	: Enabled



Throughout her twenties, Johns worked as an electrical engineer in various capacities. However, with the outbreak of World War II in 1939, her life took an unexpected turn.

The London Blitz

The London Blitz, a series of devastating bombings by the German Luftwaffe, began in September 1940 and lasted for over eight months. As the city's buildings crumbled under the relentless attacks, the Underground became the only safe haven for thousands of Londoners.

The underground tunnels provided protection from the bombings and served as temporary housing for those whose homes were destroyed. However, as survivors sought refuge in the depths of the underground system, it became clear that maintaining the network was essential for both their survival and the continuation of vital services.

Susie Johns and the London Underground

Susie Johns, with her extensive knowledge and experience in electrical engineering, joined the London Underground as a maintenance engineer during the war. Her role was to ensure that the tunnels remained operational, that power was restored after bombings, and that any damage was repaired promptly.

Johns worked tirelessly, often in dangerous and challenging conditions, to keep the Underground running smoothly. Her expertise in electrical engineering proved invaluable as she repaired damaged power lines, fixed signal systems, and ensured the safe transportation of essential supplies.

Innovation During Adversity

But Johns didn't stop at merely maintaining the existing infrastructure. She recognized the need for innovation and improvement during such difficult times.

During the war, she designed and implemented a ventilation system that significantly improved air quality in the tunnels. This innovation was crucial, as the Underground shelters were often overcrowded, creating an unhealthy and stuffy environment. Her invention made a significant difference in the lives of those seeking refuge underground.

Recognition and Legacy

Following the end of World War II, Susie Johns was recognized for her remarkable contributions to the London Underground during the war years. She was awarded several accolades for her bravery, ingenuity, and dedication.

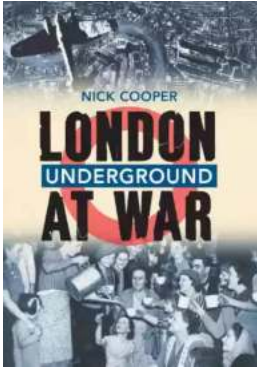
Even after the war, Johns continued to work for the London Underground, helping to rebuild and modernize the network. Her legacy lives on in the infrastructure she helped create, the improved safety measures she implemented, and the thousands of lives she touched during those challenging times.

The story of Susie Johns is one of bravery, innovation, and resilience in the face of adversity. Her contributions to the London Underground during World War II ensured the safety and well-being of countless Londoners.

Today, as we travel through the Underground's tunnels, we should take a moment to remember the inspiring individuals like Susie Johns who played a vital role in shaping its history.

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Alexander Korda's 1936 film *The Shape of Things to Come* predicted the nightmare of aerial bombing against London. Even as the storm clouds gathered, the government was woefully slow in protecting its civilian population. Some problems, such as the risk of a catastrophic flooding of the Underground network, were anticipated. But the enduring image of the Blitz is the spontaneous and community driven adoption of the Underground stations as a safe refuge from the raids. As Londoners settled into their new subterranean routine the government ordered the construction of purpose-built deep shelters and most of these still exist. In *London Underground at War* Nick Cooper examines the impact of the war on the running of the Tube and the plans to protect the system. He asks what life was like for those who sought safety underground and pays tribute to the many 'shelterers' who lost their lives in the raids. These cruel, wanton, indiscriminate bombings of London are, of course, a part of Hitler's invasion plans. He hopes, by killing large numbers of civilians, and women and children, that he will terrorize and cow the people of this mighty imperial city - Little does he know the spirit of the British nation, or the tough fibre of the Londoners.

Winston Churchill, radio broadcast, Sept 1940



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