

Friday, May 8, 2020

VE DAY 75

ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION



Oxford Mail

Looking back 75 years to the declaration of Victory in Europe
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VE DAY 75

'It was the news we had been waiting for - the war was over'

John Chipperfield

IT WAS the news everyone had been waiting for – the war with Germany was finally over.

The Oxford Mail summed it up with the headline, Germany surrenders, and reported: "The war in Europe is over. Doenitz, the Germans' new Fuehrer, has ordered unconditional surrender of all German fighting troops."

That was how the paper in its edition on Monday, May 7 1945 announced the end of the Second World War.

After six years of conflict, it was the signal for the country's biggest party to begin.

Families could finally forget fighting, blackouts, gas masks, air-raid shelters, sirens and other hardships.

Tuesday, May 8 marked VE (Victory in Europe) Day and it was time for everyone to celebrate.

Today, we reach the 75th anniversary of that historic occasion when homes and buildings were decked with flags and bunting, street parties were organised, bonfires were lit, drink flowed and dancing broke out in the street.

The picture above shows families celebrating in Blackfriars Road, St Ebbe's, Oxford. Almost the whole street turned out to cheer and wave.

One resident recalled: "People were exuberant. We gathered in the street in the morning, later there were street parties and then everyone congregated at Carfax."



Blackfriars Road, St. Ebbe's, Oxford. VE Day party 8th May 1945.

The atmosphere was electric as the city partied



VE Day in Cowley, submitted by Jean Mundy

HUNDREDS of people joined in the festivities to mark VE Day in Oxford. "The atmosphere was electric," the Oxford Mail reported.

Buses, cars, bicycles and prams were gaily decorated, and many historic buildings in the city were floodlit for the first time since 1939.

In public houses and hotels, sailors, soldiers and airmen toasted the Allied victory to which they had so bravely contributed.

The noise was deafening, with the Carfax bells struggling to be heard above bagpipes, a guitar, fire crackers, drums, bugles and

voices singing and cheering.

'No beer' signs soon appeared in pubs. Cars and vans were stopped and rocked from side to side by revellers.

A baker's van was halted, the door pulled open and loaves spilled on to the street. Many were used to bombard buses inching their way through the high-spirited crowds.

Bonfires were lit in many parts of the city, with big ones at Carfax, outside St John's College in St Giles, near Queen's College in High Street and in Broad Walk. Crowds danced around many of the fires.

Bonfires appeared in many side streets, generously fed by residents.

Children in St Clement's, accompanied by a bugle band, paraded through the streets with an effigy of Hitler, which was finally put on a bonfire. Two bonfires - at the junctions of Bailey Road and Knolles Road, Cowley, and Ridgefield Road and Drove Acre Road, East Oxford - were so fierce they burned huge craters in the road.

Two days later, the city was still celebrating - a big crowd joined a torchlight procession along High Street, through Turl Street

and Broad Street to St Giles, where another effigy of Hitler was burned.

Jean Mundy submitted this photograph of VE Day celebrations in Cowley Oxfordshire.

She was 14 years old at the time of VE Day and remembers being at school and remembers the head mistress telling the school children that the war was going to end the next day and sending them home. When she went home she told her parents the news, but they didn't believe her until they heard on the radio. Afterwards there were street parties.

VE DAY 75

Blenheim used for landings



A SERIES of photographs from private family albums has revealed Blenheim Palace was used as a secret testing ground for landing craft in the run-up to D-Day. The images show two separate amphibious vehicles being put through their paces on the iconic lake. It's believed Blenheim Palace, the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill, was chosen due to its proximity to Oxford where the Morris-Commercial Cars, which built the vehicles, was based. The estate's relative privacy and the fact it was so familiar to Churchill himself were also likely to have played a part in the decision. The fascinating photographs are featured as part of Blenheim Palace's online celebrations for VE Day. "The images offer an absolutely fascinating glimpse into Blenheim Palace's clandestine role during the Second World War," said Blenheim Palace researcher Antonia Keaney.



A policeman directing passer-by in Queens Street, Oxford, during a gas exercise.

'The day for which we have longed for is here'

THE Oxford Mail published a special edition on Tuesday, May 8 1945 to mark the Allies' victory over Germany.

Under the headline, 'Premier explains surrender terms', the paper reported: "Mr Churchill spoke this afternoon of the terms of the German surrender. He explained that the ceasefire would be effective one minute after midnight tonight."

In the late edition that day, the headline was changed to 'All civilised world celebrates'.

The text read: "The end of the European war was celebrated today throughout the civilised world."

"In London, Buckingham Palace was the chief centre of attraction. In the crowd were three people who had waited all night to see the King and Queen."

"British troops in Paris led community singing. Many in Germany lit bonfires."

The front page carried a photograph of American GIs and Oxford post women outside the Midland Bank at Carfax, with flags and copies of the Oxford Mail spreading the good news.

There was also a picture of the Victory edition coming off the presses at the paper's New Inn Hall Street offices.

Pages two and three included a

feature entitled The Long Road to Victory, following the progress of the war.

Page three was devoted to pictures, starting with a photograph of an Oxford Mail worker carrying a billboard in 1939 with the words, Britain declares war.

Other pictures showed the first evacuee children arriving in Oxford from London, an air raid shelter being put up in Headington, ration books being prepared at the Oxford Food Office, a rush of volunteers at Oxford police station to join the Local Defence Volunteers (later the Home Guard), volunteers who answered an urgent call to dig defence works in Oxford and people looking at a crater caused by the first bomb to drop in Oxford, in a field at Hinksey.

A woman bombed out of her home in London was pictured sitting forlornly with her baggage at Oxford Rest Centre, the Majestic cinema in Botley Road, waiting to be offered lodgings.

There was also a picture of a policeman wearing a gas mask, reminding people of the gas danger.

Troops back from the evacuation of Dunkirk in June 1940 were pictured giving the thumbs-up sign on Port Meadow.

A German bomb fell on open ground at Cowley and blew a boulder through

the roof of a house. The boulder landed on a bed, but no-one was hurt. There were pictures of both the house and the bed.

Other pictures showed Military Police signs at Carfax, General de Gaulle being entertained by the mayor of Oxford, Arthur Skipper, and Field Marshal Montgomery on a visit to Oxford University.

A picture of a bus conductress was accompanied by a caption which read: "As elsewhere, women in Oxford took over many of the jobs formerly looked upon as men's - in munitions, as porters, as bus conductresses, they, along with their sisters in the Services, Civil Defence and the home, were a big factor in winning the war."

No collection of wartime pictures would have been complete without a famous queue.

The caption read: "How familiar Oxford became with queues - for fish, for cakes, for buses, for entertainments, for ice cream. We got used to 'No' signs too - 'No tomatoes', 'No fish', 'No beer'."

In an editorial, under the heading 'Looking back - and forward', the Oxford Mail proclaimed: "The day for which we have longed for is here; the curtain has been rung down on Hitler's Reich which was 'to last for 1,000 years'."

FIFTY-SIX

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VE DAY 75

Marches, evensong and silence today

TWO marches, Battle's O'er and VE 75, which has been specially commissioned for the occasion, will be played on the bagpipes throughout the UK at 3pm on today. William Smith, an Oxford-based piper, will perform on the junction of Lathbury Road and Woodstock Road, Oxford, at that time.

He said: "I am proud to be participating in this historic international event to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day, a pivotal moment in our history. It's a chance to commemorate those who sacrificed so much and celebrate the peace that they achieved."

Residents wishing to celebrate VE Day are being urged to do so at home.

The coronavirus pandemic has forced Oxford City Council to cancel some its plans, but it has been able to move others online.

- 11am: Observe a two-minute silence to remember those who lost their lives

- 11.15am: Watch the Royal British Legion's VE Day Livestream, which will feature stories and memories from those who served during the Second World War

- 2.50pm: Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire delivers a VE Day message on Oxfordshire County Council's Facebook page

- 6pm: Listen to VE Day Evensong at Christchurch Cathedral.



Revellers celebrate on May 8, 1945

Churchill needed beer assurance for revelry

THE news so many had been longing to hear was finally announced on May 7, 1945 – after six years the war was over.

Victory in Europe was declared, the German Army had surrendered. The official announcement came at 3pm, when prime minister Winston Churchill broadcast to the nation.

In his speech, Churchill, aware that the war was still being fought in the Far East, and Europe and much of Britain was in ruins, added a note of caution: "We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing; but let us not forget for a moment the toil and efforts that lie ahead."

The government declared May 8 and 9 as public holidays – but only after Churchill had been assured that there was enough beer in London to meet the anticipated demand.

The British public, willing this day to come and, having at one point, stood alone to face the Nazi threat during the dark days of the Blitz and Dunkirk, didn't need a second invitation to celebrate.

Across the country parades were organised, as were church services, and right across the nation every street in every town put on a street party, with flags and bunting decorating every house.

To this day, in many households

throughout Britain, there's a shoebox or biscuit tin containing grainy black and white photographs of those amazing, joyous scenes.

People flocked into the centre of London to severally test the assumption that there was enough beer – there wasn't, as many a pub was drunk dry!

On May 8, from a Ministry of Health window, Churchill addressed the thousands of people gathered below, giving an impromptu speech.

"My dear friends," said Churchill, "this is your hour. This is not victory of a party or of any class. It's a victory of the great British nation. We were the first to draw the sword against tyranny. There we stood, alone. Did anyone want to give in?"

At this point the crowd bellowed back... NO.

"Were we down-hearted?"

Again, and almighty roar... NO!

Churchill, continued: "The lights went out and the bombs came down. But every man, woman and child in the country had no thought of quitting the struggle. London can take it."

"I say that in the long years to come not only will the people of this island but of the world, wherever the bird of freedom chirps in human hearts, look back to what we've done and they will say do not despair, do not

yield to violence and tyranny, march straightforward and die if need be-unconquered."

"I rejoice we can all take a night off today and another day tomorrow."

Crowds also gathered outside of Buckingham Palace where the King and Queen made a total of eight appearances.

Looking up at the King and Queen and cheering were two more unusual revellers – the princesses Elizabeth and Margaret, who had been given permission to join the celebrations.

Princess Elizabeth later recalled: "We stood outside and shouted, 'we want the King'... I think it was one of the most memorable nights of my life."

Across the nation, but especially in London, the partying, singing and, with social barriers breaking down, not little cavorting and canoodling too, carried on with dance halls staying open until midnight.

Gramophones and barrel organs were set up in the streets.

After six years of blackouts, when the only things that lit up the night sky were search lights, bombs and burning buildings, now fireworks flared, and bonfires burnt. An estimated 50,000 people squeezed into Piccadilly.

London's St Paul's Cathedral held 10 consecutive services giving thanks for peace, each one attended by thousands



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VE DAY 75

End of war on day we got wed



READER Sarah Healy sent in the photograph, above, on behalf of her grandparents.

They got married in May 1945 at Upper Wolvercote.

As the newlyweds came out of the church, victory in Europe was declared, says Sarah.

"My Nan still has nieces and nephews living in Oxford," she added. "I have so many stories of Wolvercote as my Nan had spent many years recalling her happy life growing up there and how she spent her time in 1920s, 1930s and 1950s."



A formation of Westland Lysander 'Army Co-operation' Monoplanes flying over Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire.

Second World War: a timeline of key events

1939
 September 1: Germany invaded Poland
 September 3: Great Britain and France declared war on Germany; the British Expeditionary Force began to leave for France
 December 13: Battle of the River Plate

1940
 April 9: Germany invaded Denmark and Norway
 May 10: Germany invaded the Low Countries
 June 3: Evacuation from Dunkirk complete
 June 8: British troops evacuated from Norway
 June 11: Italy declared war on Great Britain
 June 22: France capitulated
 June 29: Germans occupied the Channel Islands
 August 8-October 31: Battle of Britain
 October 28: Italy invaded Greece
 November 11-12: Successful attack on the Italian Fleet in Taranto Harbour
 December 9-11: Italian invasion of Egypt defeated

1941
 March 11: The Lend-Lease Bill,

allowing Britain food and fuel, passed in the United States
 March 28: Battle of Cape Matapan
 April 6: Germany invaded Greece
 April 12-December 9: Siege of Tobruk
 May 20: Formal surrender of Italian Army in Abyssinia
 May 20-31: Battle of Crete
 May 27: German battleship Bismarck sunk
 June 22: Germany invaded Russia
 August 12: Terms of the Atlantic Charter agreed
 November 18: British offensive launched in the Western Desert
 December 7: Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour
 December 8: Great Britain and the United States declared war on Japan

1942
 February 15: Fall of Singapore
 October 23-November 4: German-Italian army defeated at El Alamein

1943
 January 31: 6th Germany Army surrendered at Stalingrad
 May 13: Axis forces in Tunisia surrendered
 September 3: Allies invaded Italy
 September 8: Italy capitulated

1944
 January 22: Allied troops landed at Anzio
 June 4: Rome captured
 June 6: Flying bomb attacks on Britain started
 June: Defeat of Japanese invasion of India
 August 25: Paris liberated
 September 3: Brussels liberated
 September 17-26: Battle of Arnhem

1945
 January 17: Warsaw liberated
 March 20: British recaptured Mandalay
 May 2: German forces in Italy surrendered
 May 5: German forces in Holland, north-west Germany and Denmark surrendered unconditionally
 May 9: Unconditional surrender of Germany to the Allies ratified in Berlin
 June 10: Australian troops landed in Borneo
 August 6: First atomic bomb dropped, on Hiroshima
 August 8: Russia declared war on Japan
 August 9: Second atomic bomb dropped, on Nagasaki
 August 14: Japan surrenders



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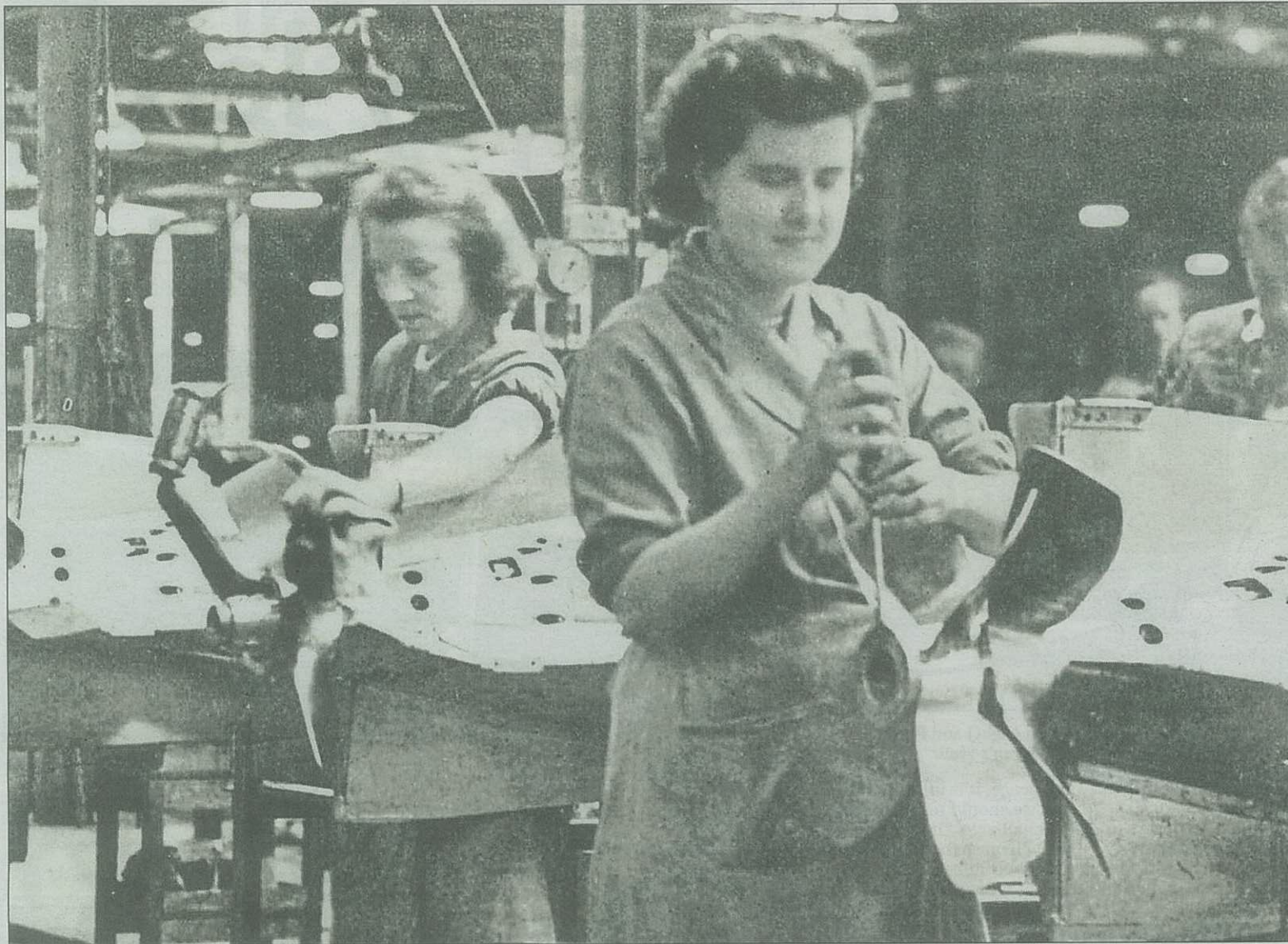
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Members of the Women's Transport Service



The actual Wren



Women at work in the Cowley factory during the Second World War

How women's roles changed after the war

VE Day was a celebration of the war's end, a way of recognising the sacrifices and hardships of the British soldiers who could now safely return home. For women in particular, this day also marked a shift in the way society operated and the roles in which people were confined.

The Second World War changed the world of work for women forever, banishing the notion that they were only fit to be housewives or to do 'women's jobs', such as nursing or being a domestic servant or shop assistants, and ushering in an age where women turned established gender roles on their head.

As men were called upon to fight, it was the women who took over the running of the country, filling jobs that were long thought of as unsuitable for women such as working in factories to produce bombs or aircraft parts through to working as engineers, mechanics, plumbers and ambulance drivers. When the war reached its conclusion, these women would not relinquish their newfound freedom easily.

This unforeseen shift was triggered when women were called up for war work, beginning in March 1941. Initially only young, single women were called upon, but by mid-1943,

almost 90 per cent of single women and 80 per cent of married women were working to ensure their country's success.

The Women's Land Army was one such project. As war was becoming ever more likely, the need for food grown within Britain was increasing, and the need for help to grow that food was even greater now that the men had gone abroad to fight. The government began the Women's Land Army to combat this lack of food, recruiting women to work on farms and take up the positions that had become free.

Established in June 1939, the women of the land army were tasked with ploughing the fields, taking care of the animals and harvesting the crops, among many other crucial tasks, and worked long hours to keep up with demand, totalling around 50 hours a week over the summer months.

The contribution of these women kept the country fed and working, whilst the involvement of others helped the war effort directly.

During the course of the war, over 640,000 women were in the armed forces, with organisations set up specifically to include them. This involved The Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS), the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) and the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS),

whose most notable member was the then Princess Elizabeth who had trained as a driver and mechanic and reached the rank of Junior Commander. Mary Churchill, Prime Minister Winston Churchill's youngest daughter, also served as a member of the ATS.

Besides these prominent examples there were many more women who flew unarmed aircraft, drove ambulances, served as nurses and worked behind enemy lines in the European resistance in the Special Operations Executive, each one of them doing their part in the war effort and fighting for their country.

But it wasn't only the women taking up these tasks that need to be recognised. Regardless of their occupation or social standing, it was up to women to take on a variety of roles in order to keep their households running, fighting a daily battle of rationing, recycling, reusing, and cultivating food in allotments and gardens.

So this VE Day, take the time to recognise the contributions of women during that time, with the war impacting them in ways no one could have predicted and forever changing the way in which women were seen as a gender, their capabilities and experiences adding to society.

Staying at home and celebrating

PEOPLE across Bicester are being urged to decorate their homes with bunting and flags and join a 'stay at home street party' to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day.

Bicester Town Council was forced to cancel planned celebrations for Victory in Europe Day.

But instead of letting the important anniversary slip, the council is urging people to bring their corner of the town to life and recreate some of the magic of the day more than seven decades ago.

Back in 1945 there was a huge celebration in Market Square with a bonfire, fireworks and a street party. For 2020, the council wants people to decorate their windows with bunting and have their own picnic in gardens, driveways or homes and toast the 75th anniversary - whilst maintaining social distancing guidelines.

On Sunday, May 10, there will be a special church service led by St Edburg's Church and broadcast online via zoom.

Bicester's Mayor, Cllr Jason Slaymaker said: "This is not quite the celebration we had planned. Sadly, we can't all come together to mark this important day due to social distancing restrictions, but we would love to see windows decorated and people celebrating in their homes, gardens and driveways."



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VE DAY 75

How the royal family led Britons through the war

Samantha Harman

ON September 3, 1939 families across the nation and the Empire gathered round their wireless sets to listen to King George VI after war with Germany was declared.

King George had come to the throne after the scandal of Mrs Simpson and the abdication of his brother Edward, Prince of Wales, and this would be his most important speech of his reign.

From childhood to the age of 30, George suffered with a bad stammer in his speech which only deepened his shyness, but having now been forced to take the throne the King, together with his wife the late Queen Mother, won an enduring place in the nation's heart as a result of his selfless actions during the war.

His radio broadcast managed to be a personal one, as if he was speaking to everyone individually. It inspired and strengthened the nation for what he knew lay ahead.

"In this grave hour, perhaps the most fateful in our history, I send to every household of my peoples, both at home and overseas, this message, spoken with the same depth of feeling for each one of you as if I were able to cross your threshold and speak to you myself.

"For the second time in the lives of most of us we are at war. Over and over again we have tried to find a peaceful way out of the differences between ourselves and those who are now our enemies. But that has been in vain.

"We have been forced into a conflict. For we are



A wartime picture of Princess Elizabeth (right) and Princess Margaret after they broadcast on "Children's Hour"

called, with our Allies, to meet the challenge of a principle which, if it were to prevail, would be fatal to any civilised order in the world.

"It is the principle which permits a State, in the selfish pursuit of power, to disregard its treaties and its solemn pledges which sanctions the use of force, or threat of force, against the Sovereignty and independence of other States.

"Such a principle, stripped of all disguise, is surely the mere primitive doctrine that might is right; and if this principle were established throughout the world, the freedom of our own country and of the whole British Commonwealth of Nations would be in danger. "But far more than this - the people of the world would be kept in bondage of fear, and all hopes of settled peace and of the security of justice and liberty among nations would be ended. This is the ultimate issue which confronts us. "For the sake of all that we ourselves hold dear, and of the world's order

and peace, it is unthinkable that we should refuse to meet the challenge. "It is to this high purpose that I now call my people at home and my people across the seas, who will make our cause their own. "I ask them to stand calm, firm and united in this time of trial. The task will be hard. There may be dark days ahead, and war can no longer be confined to the battlefield. But we can only do the right as we see the right, and reverently commit our cause to God. "If one and all keep resolutely faithful to it, ready for whatever service or sacrifice it may demand, then, with God's help, we shall prevail. May He bless and keep us all."

No sooner had hostilities been declared than the nation's shopkeepers found themselves under siege from customers, all anxious to do their bit for the war effort. Among the items on the shopping lists, people were keen to buy torches, batteries, blackout material and haversacks. As soon as scarce supplies arrived on the shelves they disappeared as word got around to the shoppers, and even when fresh consignments had been located there was then the problem of having goods transported to Southampton.

Despite the rush to the stores, counter assistants praised the "patience, forbearance and good humour" customers showed. The biggest demand was for blackout paper or material to meet tough new government regulations demanding that all windows should be blanked out during darkness in case a chink of light was seen by enemy aircraft.

The Royal Family remained a presence within the hearts of the British people



The King and Queen stand amid the bomb damage at Buckingham Palace. The Palace was a deliberate target for the Luftwaffe

throughout the war, staying put in Buckingham Palace against all advice once the terrible bombing began, despite the palace suffering from nine direct hits. This led to one of the Queen Mother's most famous phrases: "I am glad we have been bombed. Now we can look the East End in the eye."

Constantly finding ways of showing that they stood side-by-side with the people of Britain, the King and Queen would often tour many of the areas that had suffered from heavy bombing.

Princess Elizabeth joined the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service at just 18 years old, donning a pair

of coveralls and training in London as a mechanic and military truck driver. She remains the only female member of the royal family to have entered the armed forces and is the only living head of state who served in World War II.



The then Princess Elizabeth inspects group of Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) volunteers

Dancing in streets as the people rejoiced

Andy Ffrench
affrench@nqo.com

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER Marie Ollive has been enjoying memories of VE Day after uncovering her wartime diary while tidying her home during the coronavirus lockdown. Mrs Ollive is 93 and lives in an annexe next door to her daughter, Elaine Adams, in Bicester. She has many memories of living in London during the war, as her family of 13 were evacuated from Gibraltar when Britain needed to use the island as a strategic base for soldiers. Two days after arriving in Glasgow, Marie's family were all sent to London, where they could see bombs dropping all around and even witnessed the Albert Hall being bombed. Throughout the remainder of the war, Marie lived with her family in Ealing Common. She remembers VE Day very vividly, as one of the happiest and most joyous days of her life. She was 19 years old. Mrs Ollive said: "On the morning of VE Day, I woke up to the sound



Marie Ollive, right, and a friend in 1945. Picture supplied by Elaine Adams

of church bells ringing all around and the streets were full of cars; such a transformation from the years of silence and darkness that we had become used to." She recalls getting on to a packed train with her father, brother and two sisters to central London, where they walked through the streets to Parliament Square to see the ministers entering Parliament. From there, they walked to Buckingham Palace, where a happy atmosphere filled the air and throngs of people flooded the streets, singing, dancing and cheering. She said: "After a long time

of waiting, there were lights sparkling all around and the palace lit up. The King, Queen, Princesses and Winston Churchill came out and everyone was clapping, cheering and singing. Bells were ringing and people were climbing posts to get a better view. There was happiness everywhere. It was out of this world. "We stayed until we saw the moon rise behind the palace, then we got the train back home to Ealing Common, where we partied in Walpole Park. Everyone was hugging and kissing and we all sang and danced until the early hours.

"I was thrilled that after many years of war, darkness, hunger and sadness it was all finally over. I remember going to bed thinking it was a dream come true and bombs and air raids were all a thing of the past." Marie kept a diary of her time during the war. It was recently uncovered, while clearing the attic to make space for two makeshift offices for her daughter and granddaughter to work from home. Her diary entry from VE Day, May 8, 1945, said: "Today, the 8th May 1945, we in London have celebrated Victory in Europe. It was a beautiful, sunny warm day and crowds thronged the streets of London - everywhere. "I went to the city to Victoria, where with my father, brother and two sisters went to Westminster Cathedral to thank God for everything. The war is over and so are all the raids which was such a menace to the people of London. God almighty saved us from the terror of this war which has just come to an end. "From Victoria Station we walked all through Victoria Street, past the noted Cenotaph and on to Trafalgar Square where thousands of happy victorious people were singing and laughing with pure joy. We walked back to the Houses of Parliament where a great crowd had gathered to await Prime Minister Churchill. We went on and came to Westminster Cathedral where a thanksgiving had just started. "We sang till dawn and Archbishop Griffin preached a sermon. It was a grand sight to

see so many people all kneeling in prayer. After we got a train and came back home. "We had our supper and were told of a bonfire which would be lit in our own avenue. We went at 10.15pm where some of our neighbours were singing around it. "After we walked to Ealing Town Hall which was flood-lit. After that we went to Walpole Park where there was dancing and great enjoyment. At 11.45pm the searchlights all lit up the sky - it was red with bonfires from all over London. We stayed there and sang until 12.30am then we came home, singing and dancing like the rest of the crowds we met. It was grand - now it is nearly 2am as I write this memorandum and by the bedroom window I can still hear the fireworks going on outside. It is time to rejoice after so many years of patient waiting." Marie and her family moved back to Gibraltar after the war. In 1952, she married Ron Ollive and they had two children, Christopher and Elaine. Mr Ollive joined the Army and, after postings in Europe, he was commissioned as a captain, prompting a move to Ambrosden, near Bicester. The family then moved to a house in Bicester in 1969, where Mrs Ollive still lives. Her husband dies three years ago. Mrs Ollive lives in an annexe to the main house inhabited by her daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter. She has two children, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



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Battle of Britain commemorations to go online

The Battle of Britain Memorial Trust is determined to honour those who served in the RAF's victory in 1940

COMMEMORATIONS for the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain this year will take place online as the UK faces "a similar

challenge to the one it faced in 1940".

The famed Second World War air battle is normally marked with a service on a Sunday in early July but the

coronavirus pandemic has disrupted plans.

However, the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust is emulating the wartime spirit and refuses to let Covid-19

prevent remembrance of the courage and sacrifice of those who served.

Group Captain Patrick Tootal OBE, Hon Secretary of the Trust Group, said: "The country is facing a similar challenge to the one it faced in 1940 and we are determined to show the resolve that the men of the RAF showed in the face of adversity.

"We will not be beaten by the virus but will find other ways to commemorate this important year."

Memorial Day is always held on a Sunday close to the start of the Battle of Britain, which began on July 10 1940 - this year's online event is scheduled for July 12.

Group Captain Tootal added: "Clearly the coronavirus crisis means we can't have Memorial Day in its usual form, but we are committed to pressing ahead with a suitable commemoration of the RAF's victory in 1940."

The trust, which is responsible for the National Memorial to the Few on the clifftop at Capel-le-Ferne, just outside Folkestone in Kent, had planned a year-

long programme of special events to commemorate the battle's 80th anniversary, but these have been affected significantly by the pandemic.

"We hope the public will continue to support us in that ambition," Group Captain Tootal continued.

"The Trust is proud of its role as guardians of the National Memorial to the Few, and with no visitor income at present we hope those who

value the contribution made to Europe's freedom by the RAF in 1940 will play their part.

"We will be releasing more details of this year's online Memorial Day shortly, and in the meantime please consider donating to the trust in memory of the Few so that we can continue to preserve and enhance this tribute to their bravery and sacrifice," he added.



A Spitfire flies over the White Cliffs as part of last year's Remembrance Sunday events
Picture: Gareth Fuller/PA Wire



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VE DAY 75

First-hand account of VE Day

An account by Ted Wheatley

I remember V.E. Day so well. I was eleven years old and living in the village of Upper Wolvercote. We lived in a little close of five small houses at the end of an unmade gravel road. It ended in a big circle. Nobody then had cars, so this gravel circle was our playground. There were about a dozen local children. I was the oldest boy, so I was leader of the boys' gang; Marion at 14 was leader of the girls' gang. Our parents told Marion and me to prepare a special V.E. day party.

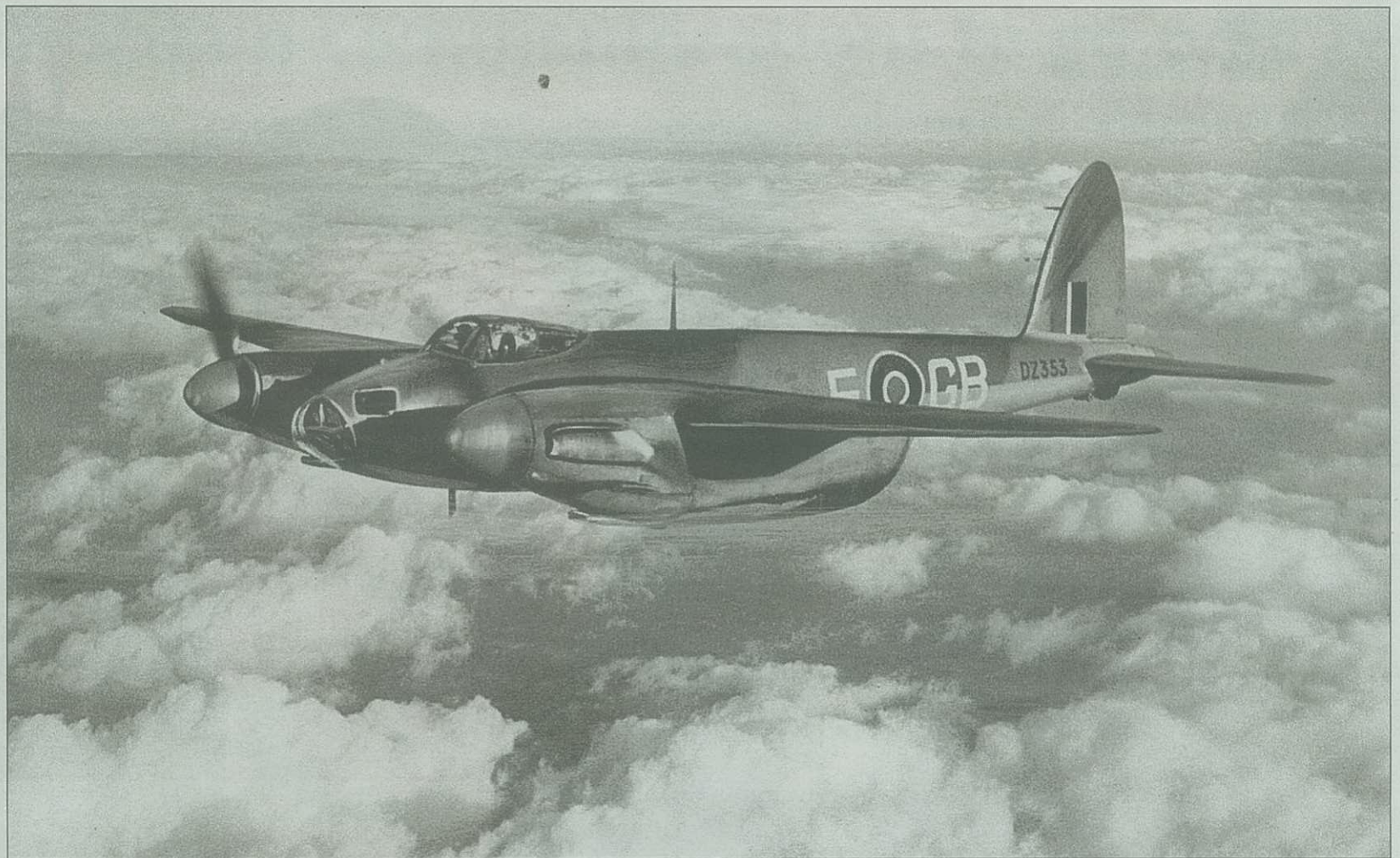
We knew a party had to mean a bonfire, so we began collecting wood and other rubbish and piled it up in the middle of the gravel circle. Various lorries arrived, unknown to us, and deposited masses of wood on our little bonfire. Soon it was so big we had to get one of the dads to climb to the top to place the effigy of Hitler on the top of the bonfire which was now over 10 feet tall.

We decided to begin with a Fancy-Dress competition. My mother dressed me up as an Indian Rajah and, as leader of the boys' gang, I duly won the competition. Nearly all the girls came dressed as fairies and you could not tell them apart.

On the evening of V.E. Day the bonfire was lit. Thank goodness it was a big circle of road. The heat was intensive. Some children went back into their houses; but in time we were all able to gather round the giant blaze. Hitler disappeared early to a communal cheer. Then there were the refreshments. After years of strict rationing nobody had much food. Our family had three allotments and 35 chickens roaming around the entire back garden. My mother would exchange eggs for sugar and margarine. Now she had worked a miracle. There were blancmanges and jellies and cakes and sandwiches; and gallons of orange squash.

We children played and danced. The grown-ups danced to gramophone music coming from one of the houses. In time all the children were put to bed. The bonfire was still blazing. Next morning the bonfire was still alight. The road felt warm two days later.

Thirty years on I returned to Upper Wolvercote with my wife. There was still a patch of black on the unmade road. Recently I received a letter from Marion, now aged 89. She said that, war or no war, those were the best days of her life. I agree.



A Royal Air Force De Havilland Mosquito aircraft in flight

Troops in Far East faced three more months of war

Samantha Harman
samantha.harman@newsquest.co.uk

THE war in Europe might have been over, but the conflict in the Far East went on for another three months.

Relatives of the men who were fighting there felt they were the 'forgotten army' as the VE Day celebrations got under way.

They had to wait until August 15 for VJ (Victory in Japan) Day. And when that day arrived, there was a crisis in Oxford – a shortage of beer.

The Oxford Mail reported on August 14, 1945 that although magistrates had agreed to extend licensing hours to midnight, pubs "would not be equal to the demand, despite the efforts of the brewers to ensure drinks all round".

Morrells and Halls breweries in the city had been working flat out, but it was not enough to satisfy demand.

"Many pubs ran out well before closing time.

There was also a warning



One of Britain's Cruiser Mk III tanks negotiating difficult country on manoeuvres during the Second World War

that although peace was about to be declared, food supplies were unlikely to improve until the end of the year.

However, the bad news

was quickly forgotten as crowds took to the streets to celebrate.

The Mail reported the following day: "Oxford was awakened to the news

of victory over Japan at midnight by the shrilling of railway engine whistles and the explosion of fireworks.

"By 1am, large crowds had assembled in the city

where revellers swung huge rattles, let off fireworks, sang, danced, pulled down any loose board they could find and clambered up lamp posts.

"As if by magic, large quantities of wood appeared at Carfax and soon an enormous bonfire was started.

"Police managed to persuade enthusiasts to keep the fire clear of the rubber paving in Cornmarket Street, but even so, it completely blocked traffic.

"At the many aerodromes in the district, flares were seen, flooding the sky with light."

In expectation of the victory announcement, Oxford Town Hall had been draped in red, white and blue and as dawn broke, the bells of Carfax Tower rang out.

Celebrations went on in the city all day and well into the night.

Other towns also celebrated, including Chipping Norton, where families enjoyed an outdoor thanksgiving service, a band concert, street parties and a fancy dress competition.

County was war home for children

SOON after VE Day, arrangements were made to return evacuees to their homes in London.

John Chipperfield
news@nqo.com

Thousands of women and children had left the capital to escape German bombing during the war and were billeted with families in Oxfordshire.

Some drifted back of their own accord soon after peace was declared, but the first official party left Oxford on a special train.

On Thursday, June 28 1945, 26 children who had been living in the Wheatley and Woodstock areas, assembled outside County Hall in New Road, Oxford, before leaving on a train from the Great Western station.

The Oxford Mail reported: "Most of them were going home after nearly six years of evacuation."

"As they waited, they were given tea, lemonade and cakes provided by the Women's Voluntary Service in co-operation with the chief billeting officer, Mrs R F Wrighton.

"One small boy had with him a big dog, which he had had since it was a puppy. He assured Mrs Wrighton that it would not bite and begged

to be allowed to take it on the train.

"Some foster parents had come along to say goodbye. The children had varying opinions on going back. Some wanted to do so, but others were not so keen.

"At least one boy didn't want to go. He is returning on Monday to live permanently with the people he has come to regard as his parents during the last few years. Many could not remember their London homes."

The Wheatley and Woodstock party was joined at the station by a large group from Oxford.

All the children wore coloured labels denoting the district of London where their homes were, and according to the colour of their labels, they were put in different sections of the train.

There was a nurse on board with a special compartment to deal with minor accidents, and members of the Women's Voluntary Service provided refreshments



Evacuees with gas masks (in cardboard parcels) and luggage all set for evacuation

during the journey. The train had set out for Oxford from Witney, where it had taken on 34 children and four adults.

After leaving Oxford, it called at Radley, Cholsey, Moulsoford, Maidenhead and Slough on its way to London's Paddington station.

Another train with about 70 evacuees left Banbury and travelled to London via Bicester and High Wycombe. At the time, several

hundred women and children were still living in Oxfordshire. Their London homes had been damaged by German bombs.

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UPDATE

Whilst we continue to do casework via email and telephone, we would also like to inform any vulnerable veterans and their families that we are able to assist initially with anyone who is self-isolating.

If you need help, please contact the following number: 07790 451567

Lynn Little Divisional Secretary

VE DAY 75



EVACUEES 1940: Suitably attired for their new surroundings in boots and overalls, four young children evacuated to North Cadbury Court, nr Yeovil, Somerset, take a walk around the farm

Countryside cared for city children



Schoolboys, complete with gas masks in cardboard boxes and luggage, all set for evacuation

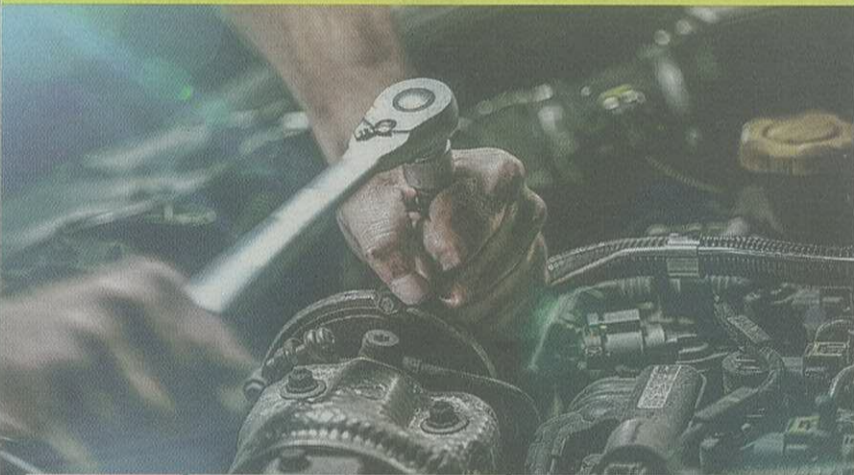


Children who suffered during the air raids are seen recuperating at Glyndebourne.



Evacuees leaving London at the onset of the Second World War.

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VE DAY 75

Bombers avoided Oxford as Hitler had eyes on it

John Chipperfield

GERMAN bombers avoided attacking Oxford during the Second World War for one very good reason.

It is thought Hitler had chosen the city to be his capital once he had conquered Britain.

As we know, he never achieved his ambition. As a result, Oxford suffered little war damage, but families still faced hardships and had to make sacrifices.

In a lengthy article as peace returned, the Oxford Mail said: "The city made a very direct contribution to the war effort though, for security reasons, little has been said up to now.

"We refer, of course, to the war factories, notably those of the Morris Works and Pressed Steel Company, and there are others, too, of lesser importance.

"Oxford, of course, has been most fortunate for it escaped the death and destruction which air attacks have caused to so many cities.

"But to look back at September 1939, can you remember switching on your wireless set on that fateful Sunday morning and hearing from Mr Neville Chamberlain that we were at war with Germany?"

"Two days before, on September 1, an advance guard of 18,000 London schoolchildren to be accommodated in Oxford under the official evacuation scheme reached the GWR station, and schoolmasters and billeting officers were kept extremely busy all day seeing the children were comfortably housed.



The Clarendon Hotel before the war

"Oxford's mobilisation of local Territorials was almost completed by 10am on September 2, 1939, and then followed months of the 'phoney' war, during which Oxford's Air Raid Precautions (ARP) exercises and training were carried out.

"A notable event in November 1939 was the opening of the Food Control Office when over 100,000 ration cards were distributed.

"Rationing began on January 8, 1940, but at that time, only butter and bacon were controlled, to be followed by sugar and meat a month later.

"One of Oxford's most historic buildings, the Clarendon Hotel in Cornmarket Street, famous as a coaching inn and known to generations of Oxonians, was closed down at the end of 1939 and subsequently taken over by the Americans as a Red Cross centre.

"In May 1940, with disaster threatening, came the call for volunteers to meet the threat of invasion, and the Local

Defence Volunteers (later known as the Home Guard) came into being.

"Oxford's response was one of which the city could be proud, and soon companies were functioning in all parts of the city.

"In those sunny but terrible months of 1940, Oxford saw the men of Dunkirk - thousands of them - quartered at Port Meadow where they were sorted out and gradually posted to their depots and re-equipped for the battles that lay ahead."

During the war, people were frequently encouraged to contribute money towards National Savings Weeks and similar campaigns, and invariably Oxford beat its targets.

A drive for scrap metal began in the city and after college and church railings had been taken, residents were asked to forfeit those in front of their houses.

With many men abroad fighting, the first bus conductresses and women bus drivers made their appearances in the city.

The Oxford Mail article continued: "Then came the blitz on London and the Midlands and night after night, Oxford's Civil Defence was on duty while planes droned overhead on their way to the Midlands and the North.

"Although the crump of bombs could be heard in the distance, Oxford escaped the attention of the Luftwaffe, except for one or two minor incidents which did not result in casualties.

"London was undergoing a terrible nightly bombing which lasted for months, and large numbers of evacuees, some of them with nothing more than the clothes they were wearing,



Adolf Hitler speaking at a rally. Date unknown.

came to Oxford, providing a tremendous problem for the local authority.

"The Majestic cinema in Botley Road was turned into a reception centre and here, large numbers lived for many weeks.

"The city which was also housing several branches of Government departments, was soon badly overcrowded.

"Throughout the grim winter of 1940-1, Oxford fire service was frequently called upon to help the hard-worked firemen of London, Bristol, Exeter, Coventry, Birmingham and other places."

In January 1941, all men between 18 and 60 were called to fire watch, outside

working hours, for 48 hours a month. Women were later drawn into the rotas.

At that time, Oxford's chief billeting officer, Stewart Swift, reported that 10,000 men, women and children had been evacuated to Oxford and that many houses were overcrowded.

The problem of feeding workers was tackled by opening municipal restaurants, one in the Assembly Room at Oxford Town Hall.

Families were encouraged to spend holidays at home and avoid using the overstretched transport system.

With the U-boat menace to Britain's petrol supplies,

road transport had to be restricted, Oxford's bus service was cut, the last services leaving the city centre at 9pm. Gas-driven buses, known as Chestnut Roasters, were used to save petrol.

When America joined the war, troops in ever-increasing numbers began to pour across the Atlantic and the American uniform was soon a familiar sight in Oxford.

Not only was the city a favourite place for Americans on leave, there were large camps in the neighbourhood. The Churchill Hospital became an American military hospital.



Some cities, such as Plymouth, were decimated. Oxford remained largely unscathed

We'll Meet Again

At 8pm today, the nation will come together for a musical tribute to VE Day on BBC One. The People's Celebration marks the anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe with stars performing hits of the 1930s and 1940s. The event will culminate in an address by the Queen at 9pm and a singalong finale with the public all around the UK invited to join in with a mass rendition of Vera Lynn's wartime classic: *We'll Meet Again*.

Dame Vera Lynn, who made *We'll Meet Again* famous as a wartime anthem, while her songs became a rousing backdrop to the battle to defeat Nazi Germany between 1939 and 1945

*We'll meet again
Don't know where
Don't know when
But I know we'll meet again
some sunny day
Keep smiling through
Just like you always do
'Til the blue skies drive
the dark clouds far away*

*So will you please say hello
To the folks that I know
Tell them I won't be long
They'll be happy to know
That as you saw me go
I was singing this song*

*We'll meet again
Don't know where
Don't know when
But I know we'll meet again
some sunny day*

*We'll meet again
Don't know where
Don't know when
But I know we'll meet again
some sunny day
Keep smiling through
Just like you always do
'Til the blue skies drive
the dark clouds far away*

Composers: Ross Parker and Hughie Charles

VE DAY 75

Troops on frontline marked



Ground crews of No.356 Squadron RAF based at the Brown's West Island, Cocos Islands, in the Far East, celebrate in front of one of their Consolidated Liberator Mark B VIs on hearing the news of the surrender of Japan
Copyright: © IWM. Original Source: iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205209723

While people back home danced in the streets, held parties and drunk London dry, across the theatres of war the news was greeted in many different ways

TUESDAY, May 8, 1945, was Victory in Europe (VE) Day, and it marked the formal end of Hitler's war. With it came the end of six years of misery, suffering, courage and endurance across the world.

Individuals reacted in very different ways to the end of the nightmare. Some celebrated by partying, others spent the day in quiet reflection, and there were those too busy carrying out tasks to do either. Ultimately nothing would be quite the same again.

It was clear, since at least the beginning of 1945, that the end of the Second World War was in sight following a series of capitulations.

The German forces in Italy surrendered on May

2. On the following day a high-ranking German delegation, including a senior admiral and a senior general, appeared at the headquarters of Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery, located near Lubeck.

Typically, Montgomery barked: "Who are these men? What do they want?"

They had come to surrender the German forces in Northern Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands.

The final document of unconditional surrender was signed at General Dwight Eisenhower's headquarters in Reims on May 7.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill and King George

VI wanted Monday, May 7 to be VE Day, but in the event, bowing to American wishes, victory was celebrated on May 8.

The USSR waited an extra day before beginning their formal celebrations.

The fighting, killing and dying went on up to the very last minute, and even continued into the immediate period of supposed peace.

A German U-boat sank two merchant ships on May 7 off the Scottish coast, and some Germans continued to fight against the Red Army for several days after VE Day.

A common reaction to the news of peace among soldiers in Europe was "I've survived".

Stuart Hills, a British

officer with an armoured regiment, finished the war deep in Germany. On hearing the news he felt immediate exhilaration and marked the occasion with some "liberated" Champagne. But then "reaction set in" as he thought of his friends who had been killed, and he no longer felt like celebrating.

A Scottish battalion let off some flares when the news came through. Later, rum was issued, and one platoon held a sing-song.

Otherwise, VE Day passed without much incident. For one unit, still in close proximity to German forces, they refused to believe the war was over, and it was business as usual.

The 8th Hussars (part of

7th Armoured Division), better known as The Desert Rats, celebrated VE Day in Northern Germany with a church parade followed by rum punch drunk beside bonfires on which swastikas were ceremonially burned.

Elsewhere there were more riotous celebrations, with men going AWOL and even some alcohol-fuelled fatalities, but these tended to occur further back from the front line.

In general terms, the British army remained well-disciplined.

The fighting might have been over but surrounded by a near-starving civilian population eking a living in the ruins of Germany's towns and cities, everyone could see that there was still

VE Day in contrasting ways



VE Day celebrations were tempered with thoughts for those who had died fighting for freedom. This RAF airman, on his way from Naples to Rome on VE Day, pauses at the British cemetery at Minturno to pay tribute to his fallen comrades

much to do. Moreover, the thought of the Far East was in the back of many minds.

For the Western Allies, of course, the conflict in Europe was only one half of the world war. At that stage, the atomic bomb was a secret known to a very few, and the end of the war with Japan seemed a very long way off.

Many soldiers, sailors and airmen in the European theatre anticipated being sent to fight the Japanese in the Far East. The men of the British Liberation Army serving in Germany interpreted the initials BLA as meaning Burma Looms Ahead.

Not surprisingly, for some troops in action in Burma, or sailors of the British Pacific Fleet fighting alongside the

US Navy, the news of victory in Europe seemed somehow unreal.

As if to rub home the fact that there was still a war to be fought, the aircraft carrier HMS Victorious was hit by a Japanese kamikaze suicide plane on the day after VE Day.

For Far Eastern troops out of the line, there was an opportunity to celebrate in various ways. Some got hold of alcohol, while the Women's Auxiliary Service (Burma), attached to 26th Indian Division, supplied mugs of tea to a race-meeting held on a beach.

A surprising number of soldiers who served in the Burma do not even mention VE Day in their memoirs and diaries.

“A Scottish battalion let off some flares when the news came through. Later, rum was issued, and one platoon held a sing-song.”

One group in the Far East who did hear about the news from Europe were prisoners of war from Britain and other parts of the Empire still held in terrible conditions in Changi Prison, Singapore, who picked up Churchill's victory broadcast on clandestine radios.

In Australia, the war with

Japan was quite literally nearer to home, and the *Sydney Morning Herald* posed the question, “Since when has it been customary to celebrate victory halfway through a contest?”

Subsequent VE Days were often quiet affairs in Australian towns and cities.

In New Zealand, victory was celebrated on May 9

in an orderly fashion – the government having made detailed plans months in advance – and the population quietly obeyed instructions.

This was in stark contrast to VE Day in the Canadian city of Halifax, where bars were unwisely closed, leading to the widespread looting of alcohol by servicemen, inevitably followed by riotous behaviour and the destruction of property.

Many sailors of the Royal Navy discovered the news of VE Day through their ships' “sparks” (radio operator) as they picked up BBC broadcasts. Many ships' captains celebrated the occasion by “splicing the mainbrace” – a euphemism for issuing a rum ration.

For some, this was a pleasant interlude in what was otherwise a normal working day.

A force of British and Canadian ships spent VE Day sailing to Jersey and Guernsey, occupied since 1940.

Although in his victory broadcast Churchill had announced that, “our dear Channel Islands are also to be freed today”, it was unclear whether the defenders intended to fight or surrender.

In the event the liberation was achieved peacefully, with the Bailiff of Jersey leading the crowds in St Helier in a rendition of the National Anthem, which the Germans had banned for the duration of the war.

VE DAY 75



Oxford MP Andrew Smith (left) and Lord Mayor of Oxford Bill Buckingham showing their true colours.



Crooks Terrace VE Day party (Wantage), 2015



Dalton Barracks 3/6/05

In pictures: commemorating VE Day on significant years



50th anniversary street party, Woodstock 1995



A beacon lighting to commemorate VE Day on top of Folly Hill, Faringdon



Ciara Campbell, 16



The Queen, Queen Mother on VE Day 1995



Noreen Skinner (Blackbird Leys)

VE DAY 75

Happiest girl in the world

By Rosanne Butler

Oh yes! I remember VE Day as if it were yesterday.

It was one of the most exciting days of my childhood in so many ways. I remember on the night of May 7th my daddy coming up to my bedroom in our tiny cottage to tell me that he had just heard on the BBC news that the war was really over and that tomorrow was going to be a holiday for everyone and so there'd be no school. Mind you, I did love school but it sounded very exciting anyway.

The next morning dawned bright and sunny so after breakfast I decided to sit out on the doorstep and sew some new clothes for my favourite doll. I had only been there for a short while when a crowd of village children and young people, my friends, came up the lane towards our cottage guiding the farmer's lovely old carthorse, Jubilee, pulling a farm cart.

They stopped at the end of our path and one of the older boys ran up to ask if I would like to go with them to collect wood for the bonfire. Of course I would! When we reached the green I could hardly believe the size of the mound of wood with all kinds of scrap material as well and when our cartload of hedge cuttings was added to it, to a little girl it seemed to reach to the sky.

After lunch I discovered something else exciting was going to happen my mum and dad (and I, of course) were going down to the village pub, The Red Lion, to celebrate. Now, I have to explain why this would be so special for me. At about 8pm it was getting dark and off we went, me in my new summer sandals and best dress, and when we reached the village the place was humming.

All the cottages had lighted windows, the blackout was over, the pub windows were wide open and a crowd of my friends were outside. Mum and dad went in and brought me out a bottle of pop and a packet of crisps - heaven! It was the first time I had ever seen anyone the worse for drink!

It got late, the bonfire began to die down and my parents decided it was time for bed. I walked between them up the lane to our little cottage. Once home by candlelight I was tucked into bed and just as mum blew out the candle I heard the church clock strike twelve - midnight! The latest I had ever been to bed!! And I think I was the happiest little eight-year-old in the whole-world.



VE Day celebration concert, 1995

How we marked the milestone anniversaries

John Chipperfield

THE people of Oxfordshire turned out in force to mark the 50th anniversary of VE Day in 1995.

In Oxford, the Salvation Army Band led war veterans in a parade from Oxford Brookes University at Headington to South Park, where the Lord Mayor, Bill Buckingham, and Oxford East MP Andrew Smith joined a large crowd at a Fun in the Parks celebration.

Soldiers from the Royal Green Jackets also marched through the city centre after a thanksgiving service at Christ Church Cathedral.

The biggest crowd turned out at Woodstock, where more than 6,000 people, including 1,000 war veterans, converged on Blenheim Park for a concert.

The evening began with a flypast by a Spitfire, Hurricane and Lancaster of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and continued with wartime songs from the Beverley Sisters and music from the



50th Anniversary party at Langdale Hall. Photographer: Antony Moore

silence brought three days of anniversary celebrations to an end.

The county turned out in force once again a decade later to mark the 60th anniversary of VE Day.

Veterans in Chipping Norton marked the anniversary in style on May 1 with a £16,328 party, thanks to a Lottery grant.

In July 2005, a major service was organised at Christ Church cathedral to commemorate the anniversary. It was organised by the Royal British Legion in Oxfordshire and Hugo Brunner, then-Oxfordshire's Lord Lieutenant.

In Woodstock on May 7, 2005, the Rotary Club marked the anniversary with a performance by the Waterloo Band of the Royal Green Jackets at Marlborough School sports hall.

For the 70th anniversary in 2015, the Oxford Mail produced a commemorative edition.

marching bands of the Royal Marines and the Royal Scots Guards.

The concert ended with everyone joining in patriotic songs in the style of the Last Night of the Proms, including Rule Britannia and Land of Hope and Glory.

Six thousand white balloons, bearing the emblem of the dove of peace, were released into the sky during the evening.

At Abingdon, a bun-

throwing ceremony took place, with town councillors tossing buns from the top of County Hall to crowds in the Market Place below. Earlier, civic leaders had joined in a VE Day service at St Helen's Church.

Attractions at Witney included a 1940s-style dance and cabaret, a display of war relics and souvenirs, a children's funfair, a pig roast and a street fair.

A Pearly King and Queen

and a Glen Miller-style band led the celebrations in the Woolgate shopping centre.

At the Robin Hood pub in Hailey Road, Witney, 'Hitler' sat in the stocks and was pelted by paying customers.

Celebrations took place in many towns and villages, among them Benson, Didcot, Longworth, Somerton, Ambrosden, Haddenham, Bampton, Bicester, Bladon and Wantage.

A nationwide two-minute