

VE Day Special Edition 2020



Upwell Parish Council



Community Magazine

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VE Day 75th Anniversary Celebrations
Friday 8th May
Upwell 'Stay at Home' House and Garden Parties

Mark the end of World War 2 in Europe by holding your own house or garden party.

(Remember: Social distancing rules still apply. Do NOT invite anyone from outside your household to your party!)

Decorate your house and garden
- party cutouts on page 15!

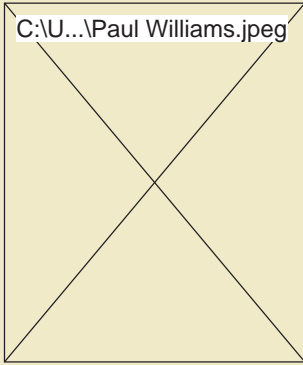
Take photos of your decorations and parties and send them through for the summer magazine upwellparish@outlook.com

Also share your photos on our facebook page Upwell Parish Council or instagram [@upwellparishcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/upwellparishcouncil)

This weekends events have been postponed until further notice



This magazine is sponsored by The Blunt Trust



Dear All,
It is with mixed emotions I write this welcome to the VE Day 75 special edition of our community magazine.

The VE Day 75 weekend was going to be a really special one for the parish. Many organisations had come together and a host of local businesses had contributed funds to help us stage a series of memorable events. This magazine is the only one that

is going ahead this weekend at the moment, but at least being in lockdown means you have plenty of time to read and enjoy it! I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the local businesses who contributed for their support, they are mentioned throughout the magazine, and also I would like to thank the trustees of the Blunt Family Trust who gave a significant donation to the funds for the weekend.

VE day was a moment of release, of celebration, after 6 long years peace had been restored in Europe and the people had the hope their lives would return to normal, and loved ones, who had been so long separated and who faced daily jeopardy, would be coming home safe. On May 8th 1945 Victory in Europe was officially declared, the allies had prevailed over the Nazi's and their evil leader Adolf Hitler. This was a truly momentous day and the decision the government took to mark the event with a celebratory weekend and a dedicated bank holiday shows how

significant they viewed it in our recent history. 75 years is a good anniversary to mark; it means there are still a group of elderly people in our community who were alive and have memories of the time, sadly most of those will be gone by the centenary hence the importance of the 75th anniversary.

The parish council invited local organisations to get involved in a VE Day 75 weekend organising committee and the idea for this magazine was born. In here you will find memories collected and written down by a fellow parish councillor, Meggan Mercer. Meggan has worked really hard interviewing and writing up the memories which make for fascinating reading. It really was a different time and we have a lot to learn by studying that period.

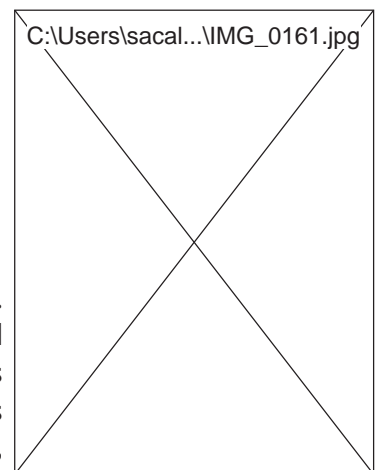
However, we little thought when we started planning the magazine and weekend events back in November that a tiny virus would completely change all our lives. At the time of writing we are still being asked to stay at home as much as possible, the NHS is on war footing trying to cope with vast numbers of sick people and sadly too many of our fellow humans are dying all over the world. The parallel with the period leading up to VE day is uncanny. When eventually we declare victory over coronavirus perhaps we will have a VC Day. We still have the funds we raised for the VE Day 75 weekend so I hope we will be able to stage, later in the year, some celebratory events not only to belatedly celebrate VE Day 75 but also the mark our victory over Covid-19.

Dr Paul Williams
Chair VE Day 75 Committee

VE DAY Celebrations in 1945

Upwell and Wisbech were very different places in 1945 from what they are today. In preparation for this special edition of the Parish Magazine I went into Wisbech Library to see how the local newspapers at the time reported the celebrations. It seems the two main local papers at the time were the Wisbech Standard and the Isle of Ely and Wisbech Advertiser. What is clear immediately on review of these papers is how much there was going on in the local area to entertain people and how more important the church was in people's lives than it is today. Although VE day was officially the Tuesday it seems news of the German surrender on the Monday morning spread in the Wisbech area during the Monday afternoon and VE Day dawned to bunting adorned streets and scenes of great celebration.

People in Wisbech thronged the streets singing and dancing until the night. Bonfires were lit and fireworks mysteriously appeared and "bangs which would once have been a cause for alarm – became commonplace". The atmosphere was light hearted and it was palpable that a great weight had been lifted from everyone's shoulders. At 3pm on VE Day afternoon the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, addressed the nation and encouraged the populace to engage in a "brief period of rejoicing" but reminded them fighting was still needed to defeat Japan in the Far East. The paper



announcement.

The bulk of the reported celebrations occurred in Wisbech. However, given the large number of people reported as being involved it is clear a lot of people from the surrounding villages went into town. A lot probably went on the local tramway which was still operating at the time. In fact despite the excitement about the end of the war the news of the strawberry crop still made it to the paper on May 11th.

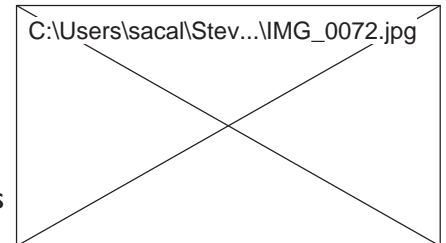
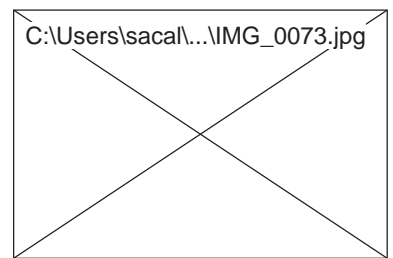
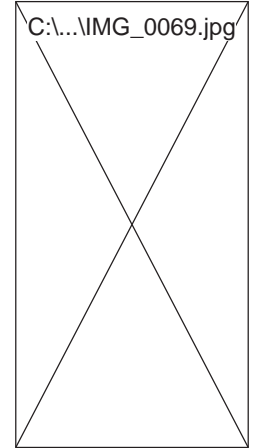
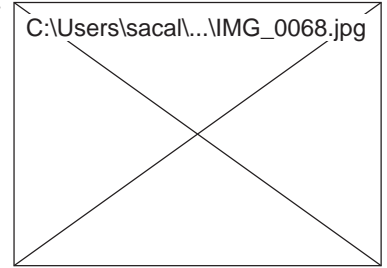
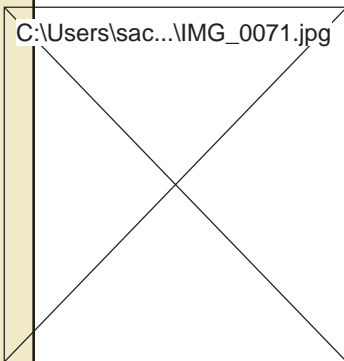
A "Mystery Ball" had been planned for the evening of May 7th and this event, in the Wisbech Corn Exchange, turned into a Victory Eve celebration for about 400 revellers. The Tuesday was a day for spontaneous celebrations but it also gave people the chance to organise great things for what the papers christened VE Day Plus One. The Borough Council granted an extension of licensing hours to midnight for the Wednesday and many pubs actually ran out of beer that day. On the Wednesday a great Victory Parade was staged in Wisbech, and a crowd estimated at six to eight thousand congregated in Wisbech Park. The event went on well into the evening and there was community singing, a display of searchlights, dancing and even a May Pole and election of a May Queen.

Children were not forgotten in the celebrations. I'm sure there were children's parties everywhere, the photo shows one at the old Dun Cow public house in Wisbech. The Standard also reports 100 lucky children from George Napier Terrace and Boyden St in Wisbech who enjoyed a hastily arranged street party on VE Day Plus One. Despite rationing the organisers managed to provide jellies, blancmanges, tarts, cakes, sandwiches, oranges and lemonade. Everyone rallied around and contributed something. One cake was decorated with a huge V, while another was inscribed "God Bless You". The children were reportedly "transfixed" by the sight of all the food having been used to wartime fare.

The main story I found specifically relating to Upwell was a detailed report on the Sunday Church Services that took place in Upwell on the 13th May. In the afternoon there was a united thanksgiving service at St. Peter's Church conducted by the Rev. Mr. Gray as the regular Rector, the Rev. Townley was unwell. There was a packed church of all denominations and the Rev. Mr. Gray was assisted by the Rev. Finlay MacKenzie, who lived at The Manse in Upwell. The Rev. MacKenzie must have been especially happy that weekend as not only had he the feel good factor from VE Day but it was reported in that week's Wisbech Standard that his son Warrant Officer Kenneth MacKenzie, had just been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC). However, the pleasure would have been tinged with anxiety as Kenneth was still serving in the Far East and was therefore still in harm's way. In fact in the evening united thanksgiving and remembrance service held at the Baptist Church in Upwell the Rev. W.H. Wheele, addressing a large congregation including the Boys and Girls Life Brigade, reminded everyone that Japan had still to be conquered, and that several boys from the Baptist Church were still fighting in Asia.

I wonder what people celebrating that week in Upwell would have thought if they had known then what momentous events would take place which would bring about VJ Day later that year?

Dr Paul Williams



In

St,

VE Day Memories

Throughout the magazine readers can enjoy and learn from the memories of VE Day in 1945 from parishioners in Upwell and Outwell Parish. It is with great thanks that I can present and preserve these precious accounts within this magazine. I had much joy collecting these memories, hearing the stories and learning about life throughout World War 2. Thank you to all who shared, enjoy.

Meggan Mercer

Peter Robinson

I lived in Sheffield in 1945, two miles from the centre and was just 6 years old. During the war the steel works and ammunitions factories worked to provide for the war effort. Both industries used water for cooling and the steam used to rise up the hill so on my street it was always a dull and overcast day. When the air raid sirens sounded at school, we all had to go outside to the shelters. There was quite a lot of bombing in Sheffield because of the steel works and ammunitions factories.

On the morning of VE day I put a nice clean shirt on to go to school and I was confused as to why. At 10 a.m. the class bells rang, and we didn't understand why because the air raid siren hadn't sounded. But we were all led into the street. As we walked around the corner onto my street, it absolutely blew me away. Tables had been put out with jelly and ice cream. There was also a band and a May-pole arch which was decorated with tissue paper in all different colours and balloons. Each house had bunting outside. I couldn't believe what I was looking at because up until that day it had been cold, miserable with fog rolling up from the rivers. We were organised into groups and taken to the archway. As we went through the arch, we were given three things; 1) a silver threepenny bit, 2) a piece of barley twist (which was a very rare thing because sweets were rationed and so non-existent) and 3) an orange. There were a few bananas, but kids had never eaten bananas, so they didn't know what they were like. We had the oranges. We were totally confused by the orange because we usually got them in our stocking at Christmas. So, the idea was to be given these three things, pass through the arch and then go sit down for jelly and ice cream. But I didn't sit down because I suddenly thought Although I've never had a silver threepenny bit, a sugar barley twist and an orange is a rare event so I did what come naturally to me which was to go back and through again! As I went through the second time, I got a great hit over the head by the chap in charge. I lost my threepenny bit and I went to my mum in tears - she was at the table with the food. My mum went to the chap and demanded my threepenny bit. He gave me another one, but I spent ages trying to find mine which fell on the floor. We had our food and went back to school to play games.

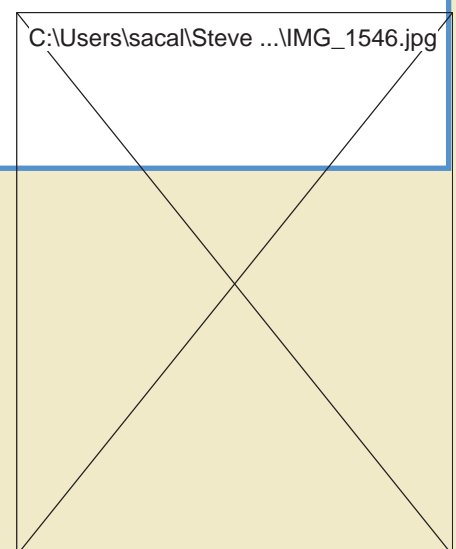
It wasn't until much later that I realised and understood that the day was VE day. I remember that day for what it wasn't. It wasn't a day I knew life as. It wasn't grey, miserable with the air raid siren sounding and then the all clear being shouted by the warden. It was colourful, safe and I was given sweets and an orange!

May

I was in the forces and stationed up in Huddersfield, Yorkshire. I remember I was walking down the road when a bus stopped, and the driver told us the war had ended.

Ivy

I lived in Emneth in 1945. I remember my dad and his mates from the farm went to the pub in the middle of the afternoon when they heard the news. He never usually drank but he was so drunk he fell over outside and slept by the cesspit.



**Pauline Shepard in Outwell
on VE day 1945**



Cyril Medcalf

I was 15 nearly 16 in 1945. I had to register when I was 16 but as I was working on the land it was classed as essential services. I was living Bedford Bank Welney at that time. On the night of 24th April 1944 about 3:30am it was like gunfire was taking slates off the house. We looked outside and could see fires in the distance on our land so me and father went outside to see. We could see lumps but couldn't quite make out what it was. We returned to the house and went back as day light broke. Well it was a plane, a Halifax, and the rear gunner survived. The lumps we saw was the engines. There was three in our field and another 20 yards from the main wreckage. When we went back the emergency services were there then and so was Doctor Barraclough from Upwell was there. He left his bag in the car and made me run to go fetch it. That was the worst plane crash I saw. I would watch the planes fly over as they came back from raids. They would fly around in circles waiting for their turn to land. One plane was limping back with an engine or two out so he was straight in. I remember the thousand bomber raid in German. The sky was black with planes - just like a flock of crows in the sky. They reckoned 1036 went and 1001 came back. It was the same when the planes and gliders went over for D day and the days after.

Our windows were blacked out at night and the motors' headlights were restricted. I remember convoys going through Manea to Boots bridge day and night. One night going down the road there is a slight bend and a drain the other side, well, three ended up in the drain! Working the land, we weren't short on chicken, eggs and we could have one pig a year. My father used to have a cup of tea, black with three sugars. Well when we were getting short on sugar and packed up sugar straight away and just had a spot of milk - he never went back to sugar. A man used to come from Manea and we could get clothes without coupons - don't know where they came from. We grew for the Ministry of Food at the time and trucks would come and take the crops. We grew grain, carrots, onions and sugar beet. When the Ministry made an order, the truck was there, and we needed to load it with the amount they needed. Anyone with an excess of strawberries had to send them to the jam factory.

I heard the war in Europe had ended over the wireless. It was a celebration, but we still had lots to do. Rationing was still in place and we had to do it all by hand, no pesticides, so I had to go back outside to hoe the onions!

Betty Watkinson

I lived in Threeholes during WWII. I remember seeing the search lights in the sky, looking for enemy aircraft. The sound of the sirens used to frighten me. Dad built a shelter in the ground, but I wouldn't go down in there, I was worried in case there were rats inside, I stayed in the house. I also remember hearing the doodle bugs coming. Our windows had paper down and across them to stop the glass from flying if they smashed. There was a plane crash down Cock Fen Road Lint House Way. All the boys in the village would go down there and get little bits to make things. My husband made a ring for his mum from some glass he found. The home guard had a blockade on the bridge checking where people were going. One day I went paddling in the river and cut my toe on a reed. It was really deep so had to go home. When we got to the stile near the home guard one man asked me if I had hurt myself. I told him my name and he took me home. Well, I needed to go to the doctors but to go over the bridge we needed a pass, so the home guard man sorted that. I had to have three stitches and I did get wrong - I wasn't allowed out for two months!

I heard the news of the war ending on the wireless. We listened to all of Winston Churchill's speech. We weren't allowed to make a noise in the house. I was pleased to think I could ride my bike with the lights on again. It was nice to feel free to go out and see the lights on in people's houses. I thought it might be easier to clean the windows now the paper could come off!



VE DAY

75TH ANNIVERSARY

A SHARED MOMENT OF CELEBRATION

8 - 10 MAY 2020

Unmentioned in Despatches

Some of them never come home to fanfares,
they dump their kit-bags down at the door,
kiss their wives and let their children
wrestle them down to the kitchen floor,
switch the telly on, pour out a whiskey,
search for the local football score.

Some of them skip the quayside welcome,
dodge the bunting and cannonade,
make their landfall in silent harbours,
nod to the coastguard, but evade
the searchlight of public scrutiny
like those engaged in the smuggling trade.

Some of them land at lonely airfields
far removed from the celebration,
hang their flying gear in a locker,
cadge a lift to the railway station,
make for home and take for granted
the short-lived thanks of a grateful nation.

Some of them miss the royal salute,
the victory parade along the Mall,
the fly-past, the ships in formation passing
the cheering crowds on the harbour wall.
Remembered only by friends and relatives,
some of them never come home at all.



Poet: Peter Wyton

Rita Cuss

I have many memories of WW2 as I was almost eight when it started. I remember how important the wireless was and how the news was listened to carefully as talk of war was imminent. I remember asking my dad, "Is there going to be a war?" Having listened to Mr Chamberlain my dad had reassured me, "No war, don't worry".

People were being advised to be prepared in case the war reached Britain. Dad dug a pit in the garden, near the house, with steps down into it. It was roofed with galvanised iron and sandbags. Ladies from the Women's Voluntary Service (WVS) brought around gas masks. My sister Heather had a red-coloured, Mickey Mouse one. The grown-ups' ones were black. These had to be carried to school and back every day and sometimes there was a gas mask drill. Once a big van drove into the playground and we all had to go into the van in turns. The van was filled with tear gas and our masks were being checked to see that they were effective.

One day some ladies (WVS I think) came into our class room with children from London. We were told to welcome them. At that time we had double-seater desks and, until things were sorted out, we had to sit three to a desk. I remember the Londoners knew different skipping games and counting-out rhymes. At that time I didn't realise how difficult it must have been for those evacuees. Some went home again fairly soon but many stayed and became locals. Some families are still here. Before dad was called up into the army his occupation as a bricklayer was reserved at first and he was an Air Raid Warden.

The night Coventry was bombed will always be in my memory. Our neighbours (The Swanns) had a cellar under their granary where they stored apples. As the bombing raids were getting worse they had shored-up the roof of the cellar and put mattresses on the floor. That night we and our neighbours all went into the 'Apple House'. We could hear the bombs falling and the gunfire all the way over in Coventry. Dad and Mr Swann were outside as their job as wardens was to keep watch. They reported to us in the cellar every so often as to what was going on. I don't think many people slept that night – the Germans even bombed Coventry Cathedral!

On VE day 1945 I was 13 years old. At that time, I lived with my family in New Road (later this part of New Road was re-named Townsend Road) Upwell. My memories of VE day are quite clear. There had been much relief and excitement in the previous few days as it was known that the war in Europe was virtually over. Our family was especially excited as we were sure that my dad, who was in the army, would soon be coming home.

I remember discussing with my friend Vesta Jarvis, who lived in Gooseberry Lane, Three Holes, that there was to be a celebration bonfire at Bull Bridge on VE Day in the evening. For many years bonfires had not been allowed at night – people had even been told to put out cigarettes when it was dark so that 'Jerry' couldn't see the light! We were hoping to go to the bonfire as there was to be music and dancing. As it turned out Vesta was unable to come, so her family had a bonfire on the river bank near their home. My mum, Beatrice Crampton, took my sisters and me to Bull Bridge. Ann was in the pram and mum, Heather and I walked. A huge bonfire had been lit in the middle of the road outside the Black Bull pub. Crowds of us were celebrating. Many of the young folk were dancing to the music supplied by Sims of Wisbech who had a loudspeaker van and played records. I didn't know how to dance but I loved the music – all the popular stuff! - especially "In the Mood" one of the most popular dance tunes of the war years.



Winston Churchill's Speech

“God bless you all. This is your victory! It is the victory of the cause of freedom in every land. In all our long history we have never seen a greater day than this. Everyone, man or woman, has done their best. Everyone has tried. Neither the long years, nor the dangers, nor the fierce attacks of the enemy, have in any way weakened the independent resolve of the British nation. God bless you all.



This picture is sponsored by Perfect Choice

My dear friends, this is your hour. This is not victory of a party or of any class. It's a victory of the great British nation as a whole. We were the first, in this ancient island, to draw the sword against tyranny. After a while we were left all alone against the most tremendous military power that has been seen. We were all alone for a whole year.

There we stood, alone. Did anyone want to give in? Were we down-hearted? 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. So we came back after long months from the jaws of death, out of the mouth of hell, while all the world wondered. When shall the reputation and faith of this generation of English men and women fail?

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.

Now we have emerged from one deadly struggle – a terrible foe has been cast on the ground and awaits our judgment and our mercy. But there is another foe who occupies large portions of the British Empire, a foe stained with cruelty and greed – the Japanese. I rejoice we can all take a night off today and another day tomorrow.



This picture is sponsored by Harnwell Electrical

Tomorrow our great Russian allies will also be celebrating victory and after that we must begin the task of rebuilding our health and homes, doing our utmost to make this country a land in which all have a chance, in which all have a duty, and we must turn ourselves to fulfil our duty to our own countrymen, and to our gallant allies of the United States who were so foully and treacherously attacked by Japan.

We will go hand and hand with them. Even if it is a hard struggle, we will not be the ones who will fail.”

Jeremy Teague

My dad was evacuated to a mining community. He said everyone still had to go to work and school on VE day but he skipped school. The next day he was sent to the headmaster's office and was last in a long line of children to be reprimanded who had skipped school the previous day. When he went into the office the headmaster asked my dad why he skipped school. My dad replied "I went to London to see my dad. He has just got home from being a prisoner of war for five years. I hadn't seen him since 1940." He was the only one who wasn't punished that day.

Pearl Buzzard

I was 14 in 1945. I was working at the music shop in Wisbech when I heard the news that the war had ended. My most poignant memory is of my Dad's brother, Uncle Len, being killed at Dunkirk and leaving a wife and baby. I remember collecting the news papers and putting them in bundles. Then we would sit on the farm gates and wait for the convoys to come passed. We would throw the newspapers to the soldiers and they would throw sweets back to us.

To celebrate all the mums cooked and baked sandwiches and cakes out of what they had. Trestle tables were put in the middle of Sutton Road and we had a street party. After the party people had races with each other for fun.

Liz Johnson

I was 11 when the war ended living in Kilburn, Paddington. I remember there was a good old knees up in Trafalgar Square.

Dev O'Shea

I was 18 years old when the war ended. I helped the scouts build a bonfire on the village green at Crowley Green. We used three scaffold boards and then filled it in with wood people had donated. There was a procession through the village to celebrate and then the bonfire was lit. The whole village came to see it. There was an army chap there who brought his gun. There wasn't any fireworks at the time so he fired his gun into the night.

Clive Payne

I was 6 years old in 1945 and lived in Ilford. I remember starting school in 1944 and I had only been there a matter of weeks before a VI came down in the school yard, blew all the windows and we had 6 weeks off while they fixed it. We played on the fuselage of it for ages. I remember being pushed in the pram by my mother down to the big Co-Op in Newbury park and seeing the big iron, static water tanks. I think there was some near the school, but they were used by the fire brigade to put out fires. Just before VE day the Americans were driving halftracks and trucks pouring down South End road. Not sure where they were going.

On VE day we had a street party and a bonfire in the road with a dance band playing. Everyone took rubbish to put on the bonfire and everyone hung bunting and flags everywhere, all down the road.

Les Price

I remember the planes flying overhead whilst living at Luton. We had an Anderson shelter in the garden and I remember some shelters had four bunk beds for sleeping. When the war ended there were military parades through Regent Street, Luton. The streets were lined with people all cheering and waving flags.

Baking in 1945

Carrot cake was a treat in 1945. As rations limited ingredients, those cooking or baking had to be inventive and make do. Carrot cake was made as with using carrots it was made with less sugar.



Carrot Cake

8fl oz (225 ml) sunflower oil, plus extra to grease

8oz (225 g) light muscovado sugar

4 medium eggs

8oz (225 g) self-raising flour

1 tsp. bicarbonate of soda

1 1/2 tsp. each mixed spice, ground cinnamon and ground ginger

5oz (150 g) sultanas

7oz (200 g) carrots, coarsely grated

2-3oz (50-75 g) walnuts or pecans, roughly chopped

For the icing

9oz (250 g) unsalted butter, very soft

1 tsp. vanilla extract

14oz (400 g) full-fat cream cheese, at room temperature

11oz (300 g) icing sugar

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 170°C (150°C fan) mark 3. Grease and line the base and sides of a round 20.5cm (8in) cake tin with parchment paper. Put the oil, sugar and eggs into a large bowl and whisk together until smooth.

2. Add the flour, soda and spices to the bowl and mix to combine. Stir in the sultanas, carrots and nuts. Scrape mixture into the prepared tin, level and bake for 1hr 5min-1hr 15min or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Leave to cool for 5min in tin, then remove from tin and leave to cool completely on a wire rack.

3. To make the icing, in a large bowl beat the butter and vanilla until completely smooth, then add the room-temperature cream cheese and mix to combine. Sift over the icing sugar and mix (carefully at first, as otherwise there will be clouds of icing sugar) until smooth and fluffy.

4. Cut the cooled cake in half horizontally through the middle. Use half the icing to sandwich the halves back together and place cake on a cake stand/plate. Spread remaining icing over top of the cake and lay on the carrot decorations, if using. Serve in slices.

(Source: Good House Keeping)

Hopscotch- a common pastime in 1945

1. Draw a hopscotch design on the ground.
2. Throw a flat stone or similar object (small beanbag, shell, button, plastic toy) to land on square one.
3. Hop through the squares, skipping the one you have your marker on.
4. Pick up the marker on your way back.
5. Pass the marker on to the next person.



Margaret Barnard

I was 17 on May 8th 1945. I lived in East London close to Hackney Marshes where the unexploded bombs were disposed of. Our house didn't have any windows because the noise from the bombs cracked them all, so we always had an electric light on. At the beginning of the war I was evacuated to Surrey to live with my Aunt. I was the only evacuee in the school and didn't like it so I saved up my pennies, got on the train and went home. When I got home my mum asked if anyone knew I had come home. They didn't, and there weren't any phones in those days so my mum had to take me to the police station because everyone was looking for me in Surrey! I stayed with mum in London from then. Before we had an Anderson shelter, we would sit under the stairs and sing - the louder the bombing the louder we sang. We then got an Anderson shelter at the bottom of the garden and I remember it being very cold. I asked the headmaster at school if us girls could wear trousers instead of a skirt and he said, "navy blue or black!" Towards the end of the war me and mum were fed up with going to the shelter when the siren sounded. We decided if it was our time me might as well go to bed and one morning, we woke up to the Anderson shelter being mangled in the garden! The doodlebugs were the worst because they would whistle. You didn't know if when they landed, they would explode or move on. One day my boss told me there was a sale on in Woolworths, so I went in my lunch break. I bought a teapot and when I came out of the shop, I could hear a doodle bug coming so I put the teapot on the pavement and laid over the top of it! We didn't have exciting food, but we didn't starve. Clothes were scarce and when your coat got too short mother would sew a strip on the bottom.

I heard the news about the war ending when it was announced over the wireless. All the church bells rang in celebration and everyone went crackers, giggling and jumping about. I remember thinking life might be better now and I might get some clothes. But of course, it did take a long time to get back to normal. That night me and my friend went up the West-end and Buckingham Palace. Everyone gathered outside Buckingham Palace - the mall was packed. It has come to light recently that the princesses were out there dancing as well. There was music playing and lots of flag waving. We met some American soldiers and were dancing with them. We had a 10 o'clock curfew as normal but we lost track of time and got into terrible trouble when we got home. Then a couple of days after we had a street party and a bonfire in the middle of the road. The whole street was there. Celebrations carried on and off for a few days.

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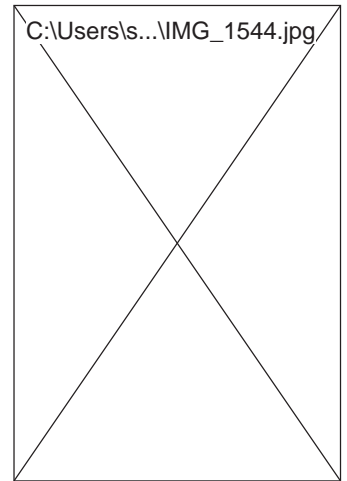
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Eileen Storey

I was 20 in 1945. I was in the ATS and living next door to the Royal Albert Hall, the student accommodation for the Royal School of Music had been occupied by the military in the war. During the war, I was a gunner at Dover but by then the guns had disbanded, and I was posted to I London District with the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards. As a gunner I was trained to work as a predictor and listen for the planes to come in. When they got in range it was my job to say fire and in the end we pressed the button to fire. We lived in tents in the field and we would hang our washing out using two twigs and a piece of string between them. The Americans were in the field next to us. They had a rocket launcher and when they fired it out all our bloomers were blown down!

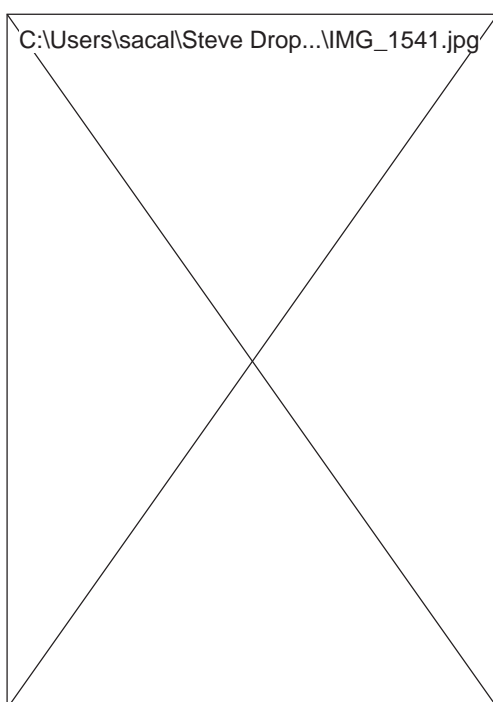


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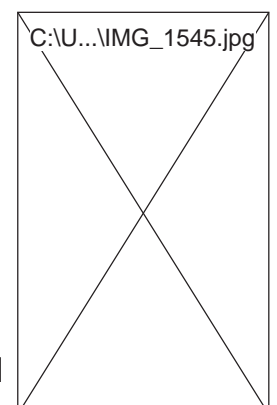
On VE Day, I was outside doing drill with the others. We knew the prime minister was going to be on the wireless, so we left someone inside listening. No-one was paying attention and we were being told off rotten. They were saying 'you'll never be picked for the victory parade if you don't pull your socks up'. Then all of a sudden someone came rushing outside shouting the war was over. Everyone took their caps off and threw them in the air. Then it took ages to find our own cap again! We all went to Buckingham Palace. The roads were full - solid with people, all singing and dancing and people of all nationalities. They were waving flags and shooting rockets. Opposite to our accommodation there was a statue of Price Albert sitting on a throne with a canopy over him. We used to have to go to PT behind him and we would say 'morning Albert'. Anyway, when the news came in, there was all sorts draped over him - underwear round his head, flags and streamers! But we just headed straight for the palace. We were lucky because we got shoved and pushed until we were right next to the railings under the balcony where the King and Queen came out. Princess Elizabeth was with them because she was in the ATS at the time, she was waving with both arms. Winston Churchill was with them. People were shouting 'we want the king, we want the king!' As we got squashed against the railings one of my buttons went through and I couldn't get away.

Everyone was pulling and tugging and of course my button came off. I said 'I'm not going away with out my button'- I had spent three years polishing that! I did find my button. We weren't allowed the electricity on during the war but that night the street lights came on. Soldiers were hanging from the lampposts and women was wearing soldier's tunics. We was up all night, nobody went to bed.

Celebrations went on for days and the VE Day parade in London was sometime after VE Day. There were horses, tanks, the men had rifles and flags. The flags depicted the battles which took place throughout history. There was military personnel of every regiment. People lined the streets to watch the parade and the parks were full of military bands. It was really nice weather



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Upwell and Outwell Parish Roll of Honour

As we celebrate 75 years since Victory in Europe day, we should remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

In 1945, Upwell parish included Upwell, Threeholes, Lakesend, Nordelph and some of Christchurch and so the roll of honour list below contains all the names of the fallen across these areas.

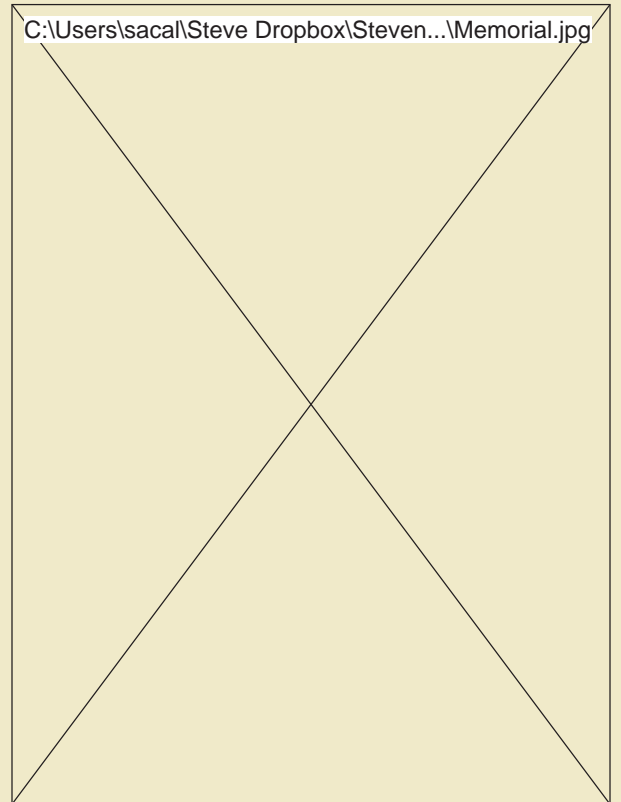
‘They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them.’

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Alfred Stewart Arnold
Jack Roland Bellamy
Bernard Bidwell
Ernest James Blunt
Reginald George Brown
Eric Cooper
Ray Cooper
Walter George Cornwell
Ernest Walter Crouch
Frank William Crouch
Stanley Curtis
Ronald France
[John Edward] Kitchener Fuller
Douglas Haig Gooch
George Melton (Tim) Hargrave
Thomas Payne Hite
John Cephus Hornigold
Kenneth Johnston

Horace Laughlin
Herbert Mee
Percy Stanley Money
John David Nunn
Norman Lionel Parker
Stanley Parmenter
Harry Plumb
Gordon Douglas Pope
Colin Rolfe
Arthur John Charles Soper
George Ernest Spriggs
Richard Peyton Townley
Charles Derek Ward
Ernest Watson
Kenneth George Wilson
(Jack) Cyril Walter Wooll
Leonard Ernest Wright
Dennis Young



Stories of the Fallen

Eric Cooper

On the afternoon of July 12 1944, Mustang fighter-bombers of 65 Squadron were flying an armed reconnaissance mission from their base at Evreux, north-west of Paris, France. Whilst patrolling the Paris to Granville railway line they began bombing the bridge at Conteville near Dreux. Mustang III FZ135 released its bomb and pulled away from the dive, but then turned sharply and crashed, believed to have been hit by shrapnel from one of the three bombs dropped that afternoon. Pilot of FZ135 was Flight Lieutenant Eric Cooper, from Outwell. He was killed outright and his body was buried the same day at 8:45pm in the Dreux town cemetery.

He was the son of Herbert (Bert) Cooper who grew up in and eventually became Postmaster in Outwell. He and his wife Grace also had a daughter, Jean, who married 'Bluey' Tidmas and followed on in the family tradition by becoming postmistress of Upwell.



Charles Derek Ward

At 7.25pm on 15th October 1942 Lancaster bombers of 106 Squadron took off on a bombing mission to Cologne, Germany, from their base at RAF Syerston, near Newark.

One of those planes was numbered W4771-ZN and its crew of seven were piloted by Pilot Officer T B Crowfoot DFC, aged 30, married to Gladys and who came from Thetford, Norfolk. Flight Engineer was Sgt E J C High. Navigator was Flying Officer A S Mears. Bomb aimer was Flying Officer A L Dickinson, Wireless Operator Flying Officer P D Smale. Sgt R E Christie was the Mid Upper Gunner, and the Rear Gunner Derek Charles Ward, aged 31. He came from Upwell, the son of Walter and Elizabeth Mary Ward, and was married to Sylvia Ward. They lived in Listers Road.

W4771-ZN had completed its bombing run and turned back for the 450-mile return journey. During this journey, they were hit by flak at 17,000 feet. Damage was obviously serious, for the plane subsequently crashed at a now unknown location. Beside the wreckage was the body of PO Crowfoot, and within the wreckage were the bodies of FO Smale and Derek Ward. The other four crew members successfully bailed out and parachuted to the ground, although FO Dickenson broke an ankle on landing. They were subsequently captured and spent the rest of the war as Prisoners Of War.

It has been surmised that the flak damage was concentrated towards the rear of the plane and that Smale and Ward were killed outright. (Ward was not able to reverse his turret and bail out of the rear hatch, which often meant that 'Tail End Charlies' were among the few who could bale out from damaged planes). It would also seem that PO Crowfoot heroically remained at the controls until all of his crew who were able to, had bailed out. Crowfoot, Smale and Ward are buried in the Rheinberg War Cemetery, Germany. The other four survived the war.





Cake toppers



Bunting

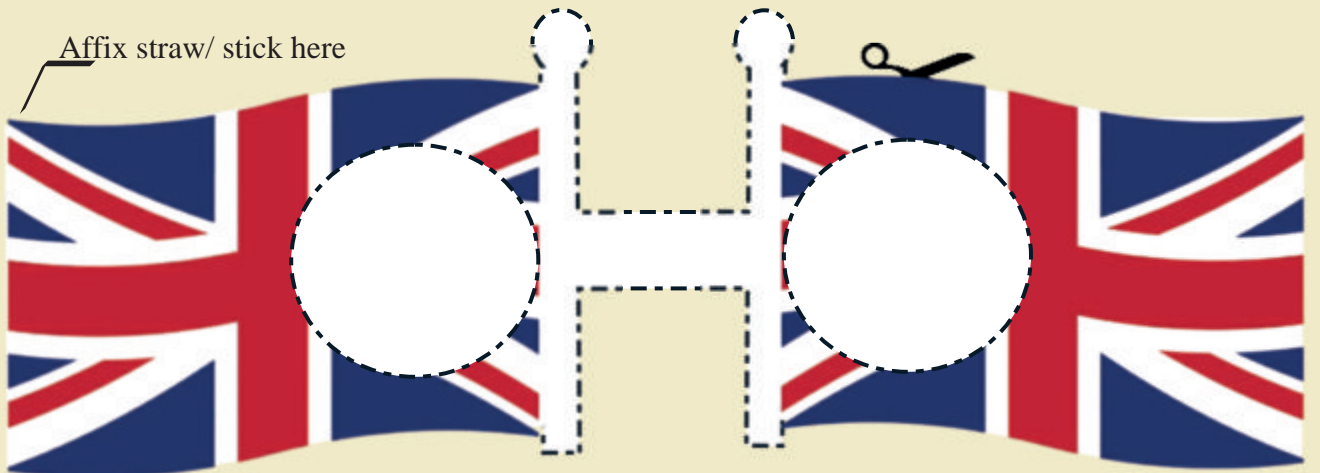


Photo booth mask

Party Cutouts

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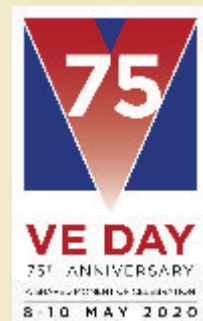
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