

Mr Oldroyd's Assembly

Monday 4th April 2020

[Click here for my introduction.](#)

Victory in Europe Day.

In June 2019, the government announced that it would move this year's early May bank holiday from Monday 4th May to Friday 8th May 2020. This was a one-off change to ensure that the bank holiday coincided with the seventy-fifth anniversary of VE Day. This affected calendar manufacturers because many of them had already printed calendars for 2020. They had to choose whether to leave the calendars as they were, complete with the wrong bank holiday date, or spend lots of money printing new copies.



What will we be celebrating on Friday 8th May?

What is Victory in Europe Day?

Just over 80 years ago, the Second World War began. It was a huge war that involved most nations of the world. On the 8th May 1945, at 3 p.m., Winston Churchill, our prime minister at that time, announced to the nation that the war in Europe was over. This meant an end to nearly six years of war that had cost the lives of millions of people and had destroyed families, homes and cities. Millions rejoiced at the news that Germany had surrendered, relieved that the intense strain of war was finally over.

In towns and cities across the world, people marked the victory with street parties, dancing and singing.

The next slides take a closer look at what happened on VE Day 75 years ago.

Here, we see people dancing for joy in the streets!

An estimated 50,000 people took to the streets around Piccadilly Circus in London to dance and celebrate. The joy of the day broke down normal social conventions, and people spoke to and hugged people whom they had never met before. Music was provided by gramophones, accordions and barrel organs, and revellers sang and danced to the popular tunes of the day.



In this picture, we can see some young people celebrating by wading in the fountain at Trafalgar Square, in London.



Here, a group of people are giving the sign for victory.



This picture shows Winston Churchill, the prime minister, waving to a huge crowd. Earlier that day, he had announced on the radio that the war in Europe was over.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEavcsrMoMw>

'VE Day in London, 1945' Video Clip.

[Please click here](#) to view the YouTube video of Churchill delivering the announcement the nation had been hoping for.

You do not need to watch the whole thing, up to 1 minute 31 seconds would do.

(You can skip the advert after a few seconds!)

Huge crowds, with lots of people dressed in the UK flag colours of red, white and blue, gathered outside Buckingham Palace in London.

They cheered as King George VI and his family, including Princess Elizabeth (our current queen) and Princess Margaret, came out onto the balcony to greet everybody.

(Princess Elizabeth and her sister were allowed to leave the palace to celebrate with crowds outside, although they had to do so secretly. The future queen described it as 'one of the most memorable nights of my life'.)



These two girls waving flags stand on the rubble of a bombed-out building. For those who had lost loved ones in the conflict, it was a time to reflect.

Before they celebrated, many went to churches and cathedrals to spend some time in prayer and remember relatives who had been killed in the war. They gave thanks to God for the victory and, throughout the country, churches rang their bells to signal the end to the fighting.

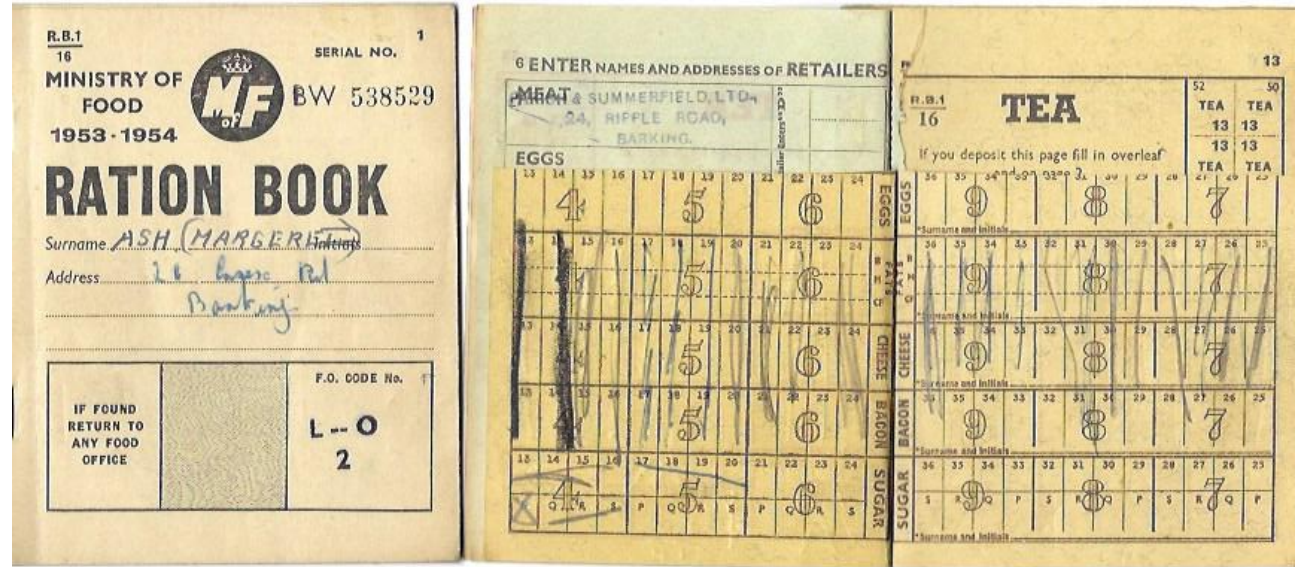
After years of wartime restrictions and dangers, including food and clothes rationing, nightly blackouts and bombing raids, people were understandably eager to let loose and enjoy themselves. However, not everyone felt like celebrating on VE Day. The hardships of the war years had taken their toll on many people, leaving them with little energy for rejoicing. For many, the celebrations were tinged with sadness.



After the celebrations of VE Day had died down, it took time to rebuild the country.

Shortages continued for several years: clothes rationing lasted until 1949 and food rationing remained in place until 1954. The photo attached shows Mrs Oldroyd's ration books from 1953/54.

Even today, for some people, their memories of VE Day are still tinged with sadness.



A Time for Reflection:

Unfortunately, we live in a world where conflict and war still exist. As we think about the seventy-fifth anniversary of VE Day, we should stop and think about how we can remember people who fought in the war to bring about peace.

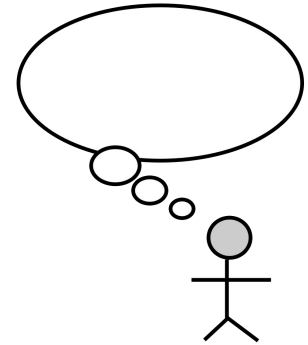
Across Europe, many events were planned to celebrate VE Day and many places had organised street parties - we would have been holding our own, at Barrow Hills.

Imagine the importance of living in peace and how we can contribute to that.

[Listen to this song](#), and take some time to ask yourselves...

'What about us?'

'What can we do to bring about peace in our school and at home?'





Prayer.



Dear God,

Thank you for all those who fought to bring peace during the Second World War.

Thank you that peace eventually came.

Please be with all those who are living in areas of the world that are affected by conflict today.

Please help us to do our bit in creating peace wherever we are.

Amen.