

Reflections on WWII and V E Day from an Octogenarian

As we are currently living through the worst “Global Pandemic” we have ever experienced in our lifetime we think back on our life since leaving school.

I, as your editor was born in 1936 and was brought up within 9 miles of Biggin Hill and two miles of Kenley both fighter stations over which the Battle of Britain took place.

Over time both my sister and I slept in a Morrison Shelter overnight with a large Irish Setter called Donald and Woggles a stray cat who had adopted us and produced a litter of kittens during an air raid at the bottom of the bed.

Donald, my soul mate, who was introduced to me at birth, felt it was his duty to bring me up and never left my side, so much so, that when at the age of 5, I escaped from our garden to the local Park he walked on the road side of the pavement never allowing me to venture onto the road.

My father in 1944 when the bombing of London was particularly heavy was away at the time felt we as a family ought to evacuate (against my mother’s wishes) down to Chedworth in Gloucestershire a quieter part of the country where my younger sister was born. I started school there but being some 1½ miles from the school had to walk across a couple of fields where my apple for lunch, unbeknown to my mother, was my passport through one occupied by a horse who was very possessive into allowing anyone through his field.

I was 9 when the V E Day celebrations took place in 1945 where all the flags and buntings were brought out of hiding and street parties took place and even an old grand piano (a treasured possession of one of our neighbours) graced the street such was the joy of being free of our daily air raids along with the “news” on the radio (the days before Television) returned to normal.

Much the same as with the “news” today on the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Peter Osborn

When Britain declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939, the United Party split. Hertzog wanted South Africa to remain neutral, but Smuts opted for joining the British war effort. ... Smuts then became the prime minister, and South Africa declared war on Germany.

During World War II, many South Africans saw military service.

The Union of South Africa participated with other British Commonwealth forces in battles in against Erwin Rommel and his Afrika Korps, and many South African pilots joined the Royal Air Force and fought against the Axis powers in the European theatre.

South Africa's contribution consisted mainly of supplying troops, airmen and material for the North African campaign (the Desert War) and the Italian Campaign as well as to Allied ships that docked at its crucial ports adjoining the Atlantic Ocean and Indian Ocean that converge at the tip of Southern Africa. Numerous volunteers also flew for the Royal Air Force.

The South African Army and Air Force played a major role in defeating the Italian forces of Benito Mussolini during the 1940–1941 East African Campaign.

Zelda Taylor.

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Lutterworth Rotary

V E Day Anniversary Celebrations

Friday 8th May 2020

Special Edition

Prior to the Coronavirus Pandemic the club had made arrangements to celebrate VE Day 75th Anniversary at Hanger 42 at Bruntingthorpe Airfield on the 8/9th May. With an indoor street party.

This had to be cancelled.

Graham Johnson on behalf of the Rotary Club suggested “A stay at Home Street Party should take place where your house and garden should be decorated in red white and blue bunting and hold a “social isolation picnic in your garden, but only with people from your house.

This was done to great effect as you will see from some of the pictures attached.

Having watched the television during the week leading up to 8th May

I thought it might interest for you to see some of the pictures taken at the time in 1945 followed by more pictures of more recent origin.



The Bulletin
WAR OVER: VE DAY IS TO-DAY - Official Surrender Signed
THE WAR IS FINALLY OVER. Today is VE Day, the day when the Germans signed the terms of their unconditional surrender to our forces. The Axis will never again threaten our freedom.



VE DAY 75

