

A Reflective VE Day 75 At Home - We'll Meet Again (part 2) Friday 8 May 2020

On this day 75 years ago, to mark VE Day, the Mayor of Tottenham, Alderman Ernest Field visited different street parties in the borough of Tottenham, including the one in the photograph below of Birkbeck Road, N17.



From the collections and © Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)

Today, in 2020, [here is the link](#) to the Mayor of Haringey Cllr Sheila Peacock as she reflects and shares her memories on what she experienced on VE Day, 75 years ago.

Today at 10.55am, before the 2-minute silence, [follow the link](#) to hear Peter Desmond (Head of Music and Performing Arts for Haringey) play the Last Post. The film will remain there, and shows images from the collections of Bruce Castle Museum & Archive and photographs kindly shared by Julian Osley.



From the collections and © Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)

The photograph above shows a street party on Broadwater Road in Tottenham. And below are two links to other views of street parties around the borough showing other photographs from the collections of Bruce Castle Museum and Archive, alongside many more kindly shared by residents past and present of the borough. You can look at the [Summerhill Road website here](#), and the [Haringay Online website here](#).

As we reflect on VE Day about those people who were there, we think of and honour **Colin Ward (96) and his partner Ricardo Sajor**, of Turnpike Lane (seen below at Bruce Castle in February 2020) who had been invited to mark VE Day in central London today. Although that is now not to be, and Colin and Ric will reflect on the day together at home in Haringey, on 11 February 2020 Colin and Ric had joined up with two other D-Day veterans for a *Radio Times* event. You can **see a short clip of the event** [here](#), with Colin amusing the crowded audience as he talks to BBC TV presenter Sophie Raworth. The giant photographs of them during the War show - on the wall from left to right - Colin Ward (96), Eric Strange (96) and Ray Smith (94).



From the collections of Bruce Castle Museum & Archive

We also highlight this great resource [*Speaking Out and Standing Firm*](#), a project created with young people from Hairngey in 2010 by Patrick Vernon of Every Generation Media in partnership with Haringey Libraries, and [includes a film](#) where past veterans of African and Caribbean heritage tell their own stories in different conflicts, interviewed by Haringey students.



© Speaking Out and Standing Firm project

We shared yesterday two exhibitions that are now online that share other memories of VE Day 75 years ago. Below is another wonderful memory of the day, from **Daphne Bradley (born 1923)**, who shared her memories with Hazel Whitehouse in 1995, and her recollections now form part of the collections of Bruce Castle Museum & Archive. Daphne Atkinson, as she was then, lived in Church Road, Tottenham.

“This is my story.....

May 8th 1945 was declared a public holiday. We were just two young girls who had gone to London to join in the VE Day celebrations and we met Ray and his friend Chuck who were doing likewise. My girlfriend’s name was Bobbie. Ray and Chuck were American Air Force officers.

Everywhere was packed solid and it was impossible to get through the crowds to the underground station to go home. We found ourselves pushed by the crowds towards St. James’ Park and we sat beside the lake until it became dark. We were very hungry as we had been out since early morning and it was impossible to get through the crowds to a café or restaurant. My friend had some cough sweets in her pocket and we shared those between us.

When it got dark there were searchlights sweeping the sky and a wonderful and beautiful display of fireworks the like of which we hadn’t seen for many years. We sat beside the lake and watched in wonderment taking in the excitement of it all.

I remember Ray saying, “*Gee, I wish my mother could see this.*” It was quite spectacular!

It got to midnight so of course by then the last train had gone. We really did not know what to do and I knew that my father would be worried.

I was wearing only a summer dress as it had been quite warm and sunny for early May and I hadn’t expected to be out so late. As we sat on the grass I felt quite cold and Ray very gallantly took off his jacket and placed it round my shoulders.

There were hundreds of people in the park all around us and everyone was going crazy. People were burning park benches and wooden fences and making enormous bonfires. It was impossible to get any sleep. The crowds sat round the bonfires singing.

We stayed in the park until morning came and then, as the crowds slowly dispersed, we wearily made our way to the nearest Underground station. When I arrived home I was met by a very angry father because I had stayed out all night.

We had all exchanged names and addresses and telephone numbers and we kept in touch for a while but of course, after the war was completely over, they went their way and we went ours.”

And we leave you with these three images from our collections at Bruce Castle Museum & Archive of VE Day and the weekend in 1945 - at Trafalgar Square, from the J.A. Prestwich factory and from a Thanksgiving Service in Bruce Castle Park.



Borough of Tottenham.

VICTORY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

IN

BRUCE CASTLE PARK,

ON

SUNDAY, 13th MAY, 1945.

The Service will be conducted by the
MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN
(REV. F. J. FINCH, M.A., Vicar of St. Ann's).

Order of Service.

Hymn: "O God, our help in ages past"

O GOD, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Beneath the shadow of Thy Throne
Thy Saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine Arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the Same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gale;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home. Amen.

Until we are able to meet again, take care, stay indoors and stay well this Bank Holiday weekend.

We will be back on Monday, where we will reflect on peace.

Best wishes

From us all at Bruce Castle

Deborah Hedgecock

Curator

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