

VE Day 1945

Was the War really over?

VE Day – Was the War over?



PICTURE: 'Today is V Day' - the war in Europe is over.

It's VE Day

Great Britain and her Allies had been at war with the Germany since September 1939.



Germany had allies too – the main ones were Italy and Japan.

Great Britain had many allies.



The VE in VE Day stands for Victory in Europe. It was the public holiday of 8th May 1945 to mark the defeat of Germany by the Allied forces.

VE Day did not mark the end to all of the fighting associated with World War 2.

Japan didn't surrender until 15th August 1945 (or 14th August, depending on time zones). Japan officially signed surrender documents on 2nd September 1945, effectively bringing World War 2 to a close.

This is celebrated as V-J Day (Victory over Japan).

It's VE Day - Let's Celebrate

After Germany surrendered on 7th May 1945, it was announced that the 8th May would be VE Day, a national holiday to celebrate victory. People danced and sang in the streets and effigies of Hitler were thrown on bonfires.

Churchill was to make several public appearances waving to the crowd and giving his "V for Victory" sign.

PICTURE: 'V is for Victory' - Churchill speaks to the crowds



It's VE Day - Let's Celebrate

Crowds gathered in Trafalgar Square and up The Mall, waiting for Winston Churchill, the wartime Prime Minister, and King George VI to make an appearance on the balcony of Buckingham Palace.



***“This is your victory.
In all our history we have never seen a
day like this.”***

- Churchill, May 1945

It didn't seem real at first. There were rumours that the war might be over but still no official announcement. Then the announcement came - Germany had capitulated and the war in Europe was over.

Church bells rang and there was dancing and singing in the streets all over Britain. It had been six long years of shortages, hardships and uncertainty.

All that was forgotten, albeit briefly, and people were happy.



Many people in Britain didn't wait for the official day of celebration and began the festivities as soon as they heard the news on 7 May.

After years of wartime restrictions and dangers – from food and clothes rationing to blackouts and bombing raids – it was understandable how eager they were to finally be able to let loose and enjoy themselves.



© IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM



Colourful bunting and flags soon lined the streets of villages, towns and cities across Britain.

On the eve of VE Day, bonfires were lit, people danced.

How did Haverhill celebrate VE Day?

Street parties
were popular

Street Party in Eden Road
*Photo courtesy of Haverhill Local
History Museum*



A Children's Victory Tea for 500 was held in the Town Hall,
followed by sports and entertainments.



Street party in Union Square
*Photo courtesy of Haverhill Local
History Museum*



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



This link is to a film about 9 minutes long. It has footage that shows how pleased people were to hear about VE Day.