

Friday 8th May 1945,
one of the most important dates of the Twentieth Century



VE Day celebrates the end of World War Two in Europe when the Allies triumphed over Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich.

The day itself fell on Friday May 8 in 2020, which the Government marked with the Early May Bank Holiday. Due to the Coronavirus, putting the country into 'lockdown' the previously planned many national outdoor events, such as the traditional Veteran's parade, unfortunately had to be cancelled due to lockdown conditions. The massive cancellations of events all over Europe, included the D-Day76 in Normandy on the 6th June.

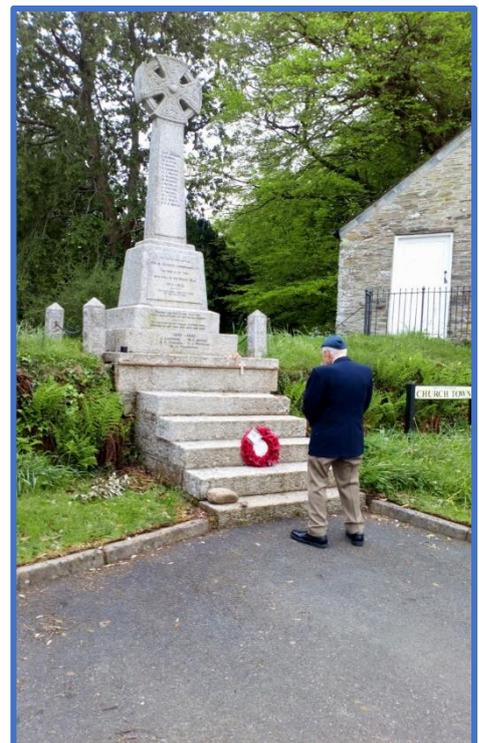
Being as many in the Village were in strict self-isolation, the planned for Remembrance Service was cancelled although many made their way to the War Memorial at 11am. However, the only surviving Veteran living in St. Tudy wished to take a moment of reflection and Remembrance of his own.

At 8am John Westlake laid a wreath to mark VE75 in lone vigil.

John Westlake spent a few moments, in social isolation, remembering the magnificent courage, fortitude, resilience and sacrifice of all those brave men and women of those years who fought for our freedom, without hesitation.

May we join with him to thank that generation for bringing us peace and doing what needed to be done.

The Historical Society had planned to open the Upper Room of the Clink to show the biographies and photographs of the five men of St. Tudy who gave their lives up during WW2, with coffee available, downstairs, after the Service. Unfortunately, they were unable to do. In lieu of this a small display was set up in the bus shelter.





At 11am many Villagers made their way to the War Memorial, observing social isolation.



Photo: Clare Hannah



***When You Go Home,
Tell Them Of Us And Say,
For Their Tomorrow,
We gave Our Today'.***

At 3pm the Nation were asked to join in the Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WW2 from the safety of their own home by standing up to raise a glass of refreshment of their choice and undertake the following 'Toast'

"To those who gave so much, we thank you,"

This was our opportunity to pay tribute to the many millions at home and abroad that gave so much to ensure we all enjoy and share the freedoms we have today.

After this, everyone was encouraged to party and many did so, in the isolation of their front gardens. As Winston Churchill said, after his speech at 3pm to announce Victory in Europe he said:

"My dear friends, this is your hour."

Winston Churchill on VE Day, 8th May 1945



Photo: Clare Hannah

Parties were held all over Europe but for many, there was a sadness. Many had lost family members. The menfolk were still away from home, many still fighting or imprisoned by the Japanese in the Far East. These latter being the men of 'The Forgotten Army' and their fight would not be over until August 15th, 1945. We commemorate and remember these men on VJ Day, the 15th August.

John Westlake, volunteered for the Local Defence Volunteers on the 14th May 1940, immediately after Anthony Eden's appeal on the radio for men to come forward. He was only 16 that day and he continued to serve with the Sidcup Home Guard for 2yrs.

On his 18th birthday in 1942 he went to the Royal Air Force Recruiting Office and signed up.

He spent two years on airfields in the South of England before June 1944 when he landed on Juno Beach, aged 20. He was a Corporal Typhoon Fitter/Armourer on the B2 airfield in Bazenville.

Moving on through the Falaise Gap he was always on forward airfields with the Typhoons. At the time of VE Day he had just crossed the Rhine and was on the Lingen airfield. It was an ordinary morning but at 3pm everyone stopped, and a massive party

