



## VE DAY 75

Further to your successful involvement in Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute - 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018, we have pleasure in inviting your participation in **VE Day 75**, being organised to celebrate/commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WW2 in Europe, as mentioned in my last communication to you last year.

The 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 was the day peace emerged after nearly six years of war, so the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020 represents an important milestone in our history. I am sure you will agree that we cannot let this day pass without reflecting on the enormous sacrifice, courage and determination of people from all walks of life who saw us through this dark period. Our celebration, **VE Day 75**, will cover the weekend of 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020, and will be an international celebration of peace – a time to remember, reflect and pay tribute to the millions who played such a vital part in achieving it.

This includes the Armed Forces personnel from many countries who gave their lives, and those who returned home injured in body and mind; the hard-working women and men who kept the factories, mines, shipyards and farms operating throughout the years of turmoil; the ARP wardens, police officers, doctors, nurses, firemen, local defence volunteers and many others who put their lives on hold to safeguard the home front.

The official, exclusive charity for **VE Day 75** is SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity, which also supports the Merchant Navy.

**The planned activities over the weekend are as follows, and please go to the VE Day 75 website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org) to see the complete overview for this important anniversary.**

- The Playing of Battle's O'er & VE 75 Years
- The Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WW2
- The Cry for Peace, around the World
- Churches & cathedrals Ringing out for Peace
- Street parties and parties in pubs, clubs, Hotels, on town and village greens and in halls etc
- Services of commemoration and celebration in churches, including the reading of the Tribute to the Millions and the playing of the Last Post

Registration for all participants will be solely through [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org). As well as adding your details you will also be able to download important documents, including a commemorative certificate, and view messages of support from individuals and organisations.

### **FRIDAY 8TH MAY 2020**

#### **3pm – Battle's O'er & VE 75 Years**

3pm is the time Winston Churchill officially announced the end of WW2 in Europe from the Cabinet Office at 10 Downing Street, London.

Pipers from around the world will open **VE Day 75** by playing Battle's O'er and VE 75 Years at 3pm local time in the country they are in, paying tribute to the millions who gave so much to earn our freedom today. Battle's O'er is the traditional tune played by pipers at the end of a battle, and VE 75 Years has been specially written for this occasion by Pipe Major Roger Bayes of the City of Norwich Pipe Band.

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Battle's O'er will be played by pipers from the top of the four highest Peaks in the UK - Ben Nevis, Scotland; Scafell Pike, England; Mount Snowdon, Wales, and Slieve Donard, Northern Ireland – and also at the five furthest points in the UK. This has never been undertaken before.

We are encouraging pipers working that day to pause at 3pm to play the tune in their workplace. It will provide pipers throughout the world the opportunity to participate without having to take time off work. We are already aware that a nurse will be playing the pipes on her hospital ward, and that others will be playing at a railway company, in a field and outside a bakery. May we suggest therefore, that you try and source a local piper to play at a location of your choice at 3pm that day as part of this aspect of VE day 75. Pipers taking part can register their involvement at the VE Day 75 website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org).

### **3pm – The Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WW2**

To coincide with the playing of Battle's O'er, we would like to encourage your Lord Mayor, Mayor, Leader, Chairman of the Council, High Steward, High Sheriff, Deputy Lord Lieutenant or another, to lead your local community in the Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WW2 at 3pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020, paying 'tribute' to the millions at home and abroad that gave so much to ensure we all enjoy the freedom we have today. Please register your involvement on the VE day 75 website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org).

In association with the British Beer & Pub Association, the thousands of pubs throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man will be inviting their customers to raise a glass at 3pm too and take part in The Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WW2. All pubs taking part can register their involvement on the VE Day 75 website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org).

### **6.55pm – A Cry for Peace Around the World**

Town Criers and members of local communities around the world will be undertaking A Cry for Peace Around the World, kindly written for this occasion by Crier Peter Taunton. The 'Cry', which can be downloaded from the website, will be performed at 7pm local time in locations around the world, starting in New Zealand. Those Town Criers and others undertaking this 'Cry' can register their involvement on the VE Day 75 website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org)

### **7pm – Ringing out for Peace**

Bells in churches and cathedrals will ring out at 7pm in a collective celebration of VE Day 75. The sound of church bells is deeply rooted in British culture. They provide the grand soundtrack to our historic moments, calling us to wake, to pray, to work, to arms, to feast, to celebrate and, in times of crisis, to come together. This aspect of VE Day 75 could not be more appropriate, ringing out around the world to celebrate the peace we share today. Please encourage your local church to take part, registering their participation on the VE day website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org).

### **7pm onwards – Parties and Celebration**

Parties and celebrations will take place in pubs, clubs and hotels, on town and village greens and in our streets, bringing the communities of the nation together in common friendship. Those town and cities twinned with others around the world will be encouraged invite them to join in this joyous occasion. We know that many of those taking part will be organising firework displays over the weekend too. Those taking part in this celebratory element of the event can register their involvement on the VE day 75 website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org).

## **SATURDAY 9TH MAY 2020**

Parties and celebrations continue.

## **SUNDAY 10TH MAY 2020**

### **10.30am – Church Services of Celebration and Commemoration**

Services will take place in cathedrals and churches throughout the UK, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man to celebrate the peace we share today and remember those who lost their lives or returned home dreadfully wounded. The services will also recognise the sacrifices of those who kept the nation fed and the factories, mines and hospitals working during the most challenging of time, so please encourage your local churches to participate. Churches wishing to take part should register their involvement on the VE Day 75 website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org).

### **Tribute to the Millions & the Last Post**

Those planning services will be encouraged to ask a representative from their local community to read out the Tribute to the Millions, which can be downloaded at [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org), and involve a local bugler or trumpeter to

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play the Last Post and Reveille. Their participation can also be registered on the VE DAY 75 website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org).

We do hope that you will take part in **VE Day 75** especially as many of those that served at home and abroad came from the Towns and Parishes of England, so your involvement will be a perfect 'tribute' to the sacrifices made by so many of them.

Please be kind enough to register your involvement in one or more of the events by going to the VE Day 75 Website – [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org) as soon as possible to enable us to keep in touch with you and update you on progress, along with putting this letter up on your website, and circulating it widely via other forms of social media such as facebook and twitter.

My warmest regards,

*Bruno Peek*

Bruno Peek LVO OBE OPR  
Pageantmaster VE Day 75  
Tel: + 44 (0) 7737 262 913  
Email: [brunopeek@mac.com](mailto:brunopeek@mac.com)  
Website: [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org)

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