



VE Day – 75th Anniversary

A shared moment of celebration

Cambridge

Primrose Croft

VE day preparation started early at Primrose Croft Care Home, as the residents were keen to decorate the whole home.

They handmade banners, posters and hats to wear on the day, as well as a themed photo frame to capture pictures in. So when the day did arrive, everyone was excited to use the props and pose for pictures. They took turns standing in the frame and posing for pictures to commemorate the day. While other people were waiting, they sang some songs from the past to get everyone in the mood and shared their memories from VE day in 1945.

A two minute silence was held at 11am to remember those sacrificed their lives for our country. Derek, a resident at the home, stood proudly for the two minutes and shed a tear as he recalled experiences from the past.



Some of the residents then spent time re-watching Sir Winston Churchill's end of war speech. This was done using the care home's digital tablets, so residents in their rooms to join in too! Ursula said re-listening to the speech brought back memories of sitting on her father's lap and listening to it on the radio. It was an emotional moment, but telling the group helped Ursula to relive this memorable moment again.

Due to the current restrictions that are in place, VE day couldn't be celebrated as it usually would at the home. Visitors and entertainers would usually be invited to join in, but as that's not possible, Carer and swing vocalist, Ryan put on a nostalgic performance to lift the mood. Before long, everyone was singing dancing and smiling, which was a lovely way to finish an emotional day!



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Essex

Ashlyn

Team members at Ashlyn prepared for the day by giving their garden and areas inside the home a makeover for VE day.

Banners, bunting and British flags were hung around the home to nod to theme. Vintage items were also on display to aid reminiscence and encourage people to share stories from their past.

To start the day, the residents decorated blank mugs with VE day pictures and memorable moments from the time. While doing this, people were sharing their memories from VE day and how they spent it, 75 years ago. We quickly understood that if you weren't alive in the time, it would be hard to comprehend the joy and relief felt when the war came to an end.



Carol, a resident at Ashlyn, decided to write a personal message on her mug instead. She wrote some lovely words about the brave men and women who lost their lives so we could live in peace. It was a really touching idea and when Carol uses this mug in the future, she'll be reminded of those heroic people who helped to save our country.

In the afternoon, residents headed out into the sun for a sing and dance to some songs from the 40s and 50s. 'We will meet again' was a popular song and singing along together, brought back memories of singing victory songs in the streets, all those years ago.



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Lime Court

It was a morning of reminiscence and reflecting at Lime Court Care Home on VE day. Residents spending time in their rooms and those in the communal areas, all watched Winston Churchill's victory speech to get the morning started.

Many of the residents remember when this was aired back in 1945 and have some clear memories of it. Rene (aged 98) was in the RAF during the war and aged twenty three on VE Day. Rene says "I can remember there being lots of happiness and celebrations outside. We had a street party with bunting. We were all singing and very happy".

Masie (aged 100) also remembers VE day in 1945 and said, "It was an awful war, but we did get some fun out of it. I can remember when there was an explosion at Bramble Island and I was very lucky to survive. So when war was declared over we did celebrate on VE Day. I can remember lots of merriment at the street parties we had. I married shortly after the war. My wedding dress was made from silk from parachutes by a local dressmaker called Mrs Toffle".

The afternoon was spent partying away in the garden to some classic Vera Lynn tunes. Entertainer, James Cowdery, had recorded a special VE Day celebration show as he couldn't be there in person. This really helped to lift spirits and was the next best thing to seeing him in person

To mark the occasion and finish the day in style, residents posed for pictures inside a VE day themed frame, to serve as a reminder of their 75th year celebrations.





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Longfield



To honour VE Day at Longfield Care Home they hosted and all singing, all dancing garden party.

There was entertainment from Kyla, a Carer at Longfield who is also a talented singer. With entertainers not currently permitted into the home, having a friendly face to step up and perform was pleasing for all. She sang some of the resident's favourites as well as classics from the 40s and 50s, which helped to bring back fond memories and stories from VE day.

Meanwhile, the kitchen team had spent the morning preparing a large lunch spread. They even made a cake with the union jack on to fit the theme – it looked great but tasted even better!

It was a really enjoyable celebrating and spending time in the garden. The majority of the last few weeks have been spent inside, so getting out in the sun and celebrating with friends was refreshing for all.

Stanley Wilson Lodge

The residents at Stanley Wilson Lodge spent VE Day getting creative and making themed displays.

This year marked 75 years since VE day, so the residents made this part of their design to honour the special anniversary. Using pictures and flags, the residents laid out their design on the colourful backing boards before securing them in place with help from the team. While they were looking through and positioning the photos, connected memories were recalled which and first-hand accounts were shared with their friends.

To complement the day's celebrations, team members in the kitchen made spam and crab cake sandwiches. These were staple foods during the war, so tasting them again 75 years later certainly brought back some memories,

The rest of the afternoon was spent chatting to friends and dancing along to popular music from the past.





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St Fillans

The residents at St Fillan's Care Home also created a colourful photo frame to pose inside on VE Day. Usually, team members from the home would invite families and friends to make the day extra special, but this period of lockdown has unfortunately meant that's not possible.

Instead, they decided to send these VE day themed pictures to their friends and families, showing that they're in good spirits and keeping up with their usual celebrations.

A relative's band then stopped by, to lift spirits and perform some songs for the residents. Standing a safe distance apart, they played

some popular songs from the 40s and 50s, which the residents watched through the window. Before long, neighbours were setting up chairs on their doorsteps to watch and sing along with the residents. This brought back memories from VE day street parties and other special ways people have celebrated throughout the years.

In the afternoon, members from the Mercury Theatre stopped by to host a session from the carpark. This group usually visit the care home, but the since the restrictions have been enforced they've not been able to. Seeing their friendly faces on VE day was certainly pleasing for all and we can't wait to welcome them back when the pandemic has passed.





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Winifred Dell

At Winifred Dell Care Home, the residents and team members collaborated to create a nostalgic display using items from the past. An old radio, ration books and newspaper clippings were some of the items they used, which the residents enjoyed reading and reminiscing with.

These items took the residents back in time and as they looked through and interacted with them, personal stories and experiences were shared. This helped to create conversation amongst the group and helped people to connect, as most people had similar experiences and faced the same challenges.



After a morning of chatting and reminiscing, the Lifestyle Coordinator took a group of residents to help bake a VE day themed cake. The residents love baking and decorating cakes, so this themed session was set up to keep the residents engaged with the day's celebrations whilst doing something they all enjoy.

Together, they created a large cake for VE day, complete with themed decorations and pictures. When complete, it was placed on their VE day display as an eye catching centrepiece and enjoyed over a cup of tea later in the evening.



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London

Park Avenue

At Park Avenue, everyone celebrated in style; the home was decorated with British flags and the tables set up with quizzes and word searches for the group to take part in!

Lifestyle Coordinator Gladys had been planning the celebrations for weeks, making arrangements with the Home Manager, Gemma, kitchen team and residents. Many of the residents had their own memories of VE Day, 75 years prior. Understanding that this is such an important part of their history, the team at Park Avenue all worked together, keen to make this a day to remember! The home kicked off the VE Day celebrations with music from Dame Vera Lynn, and shortly after an Afternoon Tea trolley made its way down the hallways, offering themed cakes and refreshments. After this, everyone sat down to take part in some friendly competition by completing the quiz and word searches.



Home Manager Gemma Weldon could not resist having a jive with the residents, and many of the residents joined in with a sing-along to old classics! "On the day, I posted some pictures on our Facebook page, and it was really nice to read all the positive comments from family and friends," said Gemma, "we are so grateful!"

VE Day at Park Avenue went down a treat, with many of the people living there sharing their thanks with the team.



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Queens Oak

Residents and team members at Queens Oak Care Home were busy decorating communal areas to celebrate VE day. They used bunting, flags and British colours to theme rooms around the home and for their efforts, received a shiny gold medals from the team.

The residents at Queens Oak have many interesting stories from the war and VE day, so they sat down as a group to share their experiences from the time. It was interesting yet shocking to hear some of the things they lived through! One of the residents said if we can get through that, then we can get through this pandemic! It helped to put everything in perspective and gave people something positive to take away.



After lunch, a group of residents gathered in the lounge to watch a Vera Lynn concert from the wartime era. These songs are familiar for many of the residents and for some, it's their favourite!

Everyone sang along and moved in time from their chairs. It was a truly fantastic afternoon that honoured an important event in the resident's lives whilst keeping them entertained too.