

# Wartime West Sussex 1939 – 1945

## VE DAY and VJ DAY

### VE Day in Shoreham and Southwick

**Shoreham Herald, May 11th 1945**

#### **VICTORY REJOICINGS IN BOTH TOWNS CHURCH SERVICES AND STREET PARTY**

**The bells of St Mary's Church, Shoreham, broke out into a grand peal of rejoicing as the Prime Minister broadcast the official news of the German unconditional surrender, and the bugles sounded the "Cease Fire". The end of the War in Europe had come.**

**But Shoreham and Southwick, like the rest of the country, had begun celebrating the great victory hours before.**

Flags and bunting made their appearance in Shoreham and Southwick during Monday evening, and by the morning of VE-Day itself there were few buildings that did not display decorations.

Children everywhere carried their flags – Union Jacks and "Old Glory" predominating – and young and old alike wore rosettes or favours of red, white and blue. Flags fluttered from the two Town Halls – the only Soviet flag the "Herald" reporter saw in Shoreham was over the Town Hall doorway, with those of the other allies.

#### THANKSGIVING

But there were thanksgivings mingled with the rejoicings and throughout the day people visited the churches in the two towns to give thanks for the Victory.

In the evening the Vicar of Shoreham (the Rev. F.S.W. Simpson) conducted a service at St Giles' Church, followed by another one in the parish church of St Mary de Haura, at which Coun. S.J. Williams (chairman of the Urban Council) and colleagues were present among the large congregation.

Simultaneously another service was held in St Nicolas' Church, Old Shoreham, by the lay reader Mr F. Edwards. Roman Catholics thronged the Church of St Peter for Benediction and Te Deum, with the Rev Father Sproston as officiating priest. Still another service was held at the Methodist Church.

Three special Communion services were held at St Michael's, Southwick, on each of the two days, and two Victory Thanksgiving services were conducted on Tuesday by the Rector (the Rev. H.H. Tarrant).

A Victory peal was rung on Tuesday evening at Kingston Buci parish church, after which the Rector (the Rev. T. Glaisyer) officiated at a thanksgiving evensong.

At S.S. Peter and Mary, Southwick, a special Holy Communion and Matins was well attended on Tuesday morning, as was the Thanksgiving evensong...

#### FUN AT THE GREEN

Wednesday saw Southwick's ancient Green the scene of joyous activity. "All the Fun of the Fair" amusements organised by the Civil Defence Association filled the morning.

But the afternoon was the time. The Green was the Mecca of thousands of happy people who had mainly come to see the children, for it was undoubtedly the children's afternoon. They had sports and a grand free tea...

Then there was a cricket match Southwick against Mr Bennett's XI from Brighton.

A grand afternoon – until the rain came. Everyone enjoyed the festivities and was grateful to the organising committee, headed by Mr. W.J. Gibbons, and the C.D. Association's efforts helped greatly in giving truth to the old saying "a good time was had by all".

Another short Service of Thanksgiving took place in the Parish Church in the evening.

Many of Shoreham's children had a jolly time in St Peter's Hall, with Mr George Gulliver (ventriloquist and his doll) as a star attraction.....

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#### SHOREHAM HAD AN ENORMOUS BONFIRE

Shoreham had an enormous bonfire on VE-night at the junction of the Drive and The Driveway. It was surmounted by an effigy of Hitler, in uniform and heil-uplifted arm.

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