

Where were you on VE Day 1945?

Doug Townsend

When the war broke out on 3rd September 1939 I was aged 7 and I can remember the Siren on Kensal Rise Hill sounding as I was with my Mum and Dad walking up Kensal Rise Hill, it was Sunday and we were walking home from Church. I was not evacuated as my Mum did not want me to go, nor did I so I spent the War in West London throughout the Blitz. We were nearly bombed out as a bomb destroyed 6 houses opposite our home, killing one of our neighbours



as he was in the house, most were in their Anderson Shelter in their gardens. When, this occurred we were away. On our return home the next day the roof was off, and all windows were shattered. Soon after that we were given a Morrison Shelter (Tabletop) where we slept when an Air raid was on.

On VE day my Mum and Dad decided as Londoners said in those, "We are going up West" meaning the West End of London. We took a No 6 Bus from Kensal Rise to Oxford Street and joined the crowds of people celebrating the End of the War in Europe. As you can imagine London was crowded with Service men and women all celebrating and having a great time. We eventually made our way down the Mall to Buckingham Palace and were close to the railings when the King and Queen with their two daughters accompanied by The Prime Minister Winston Churchill appeared on the balcony, if my memory serves me correctly, around 3 O'clock.



That day buses and trains were free but stopped running around 5pm, when we started our journey home they had stopped running, the answer was walk home. We made our way to Edgware Road and walked towards Maida Vale, turning into Harrow Road. Every street had a party in progress with a Bon Fire, of course we stopped at many to see what was going on and eventually arrived home in Kensal Rise about 4am.



It was an exciting day in so many ways, having lived throughout the Blitz and to know that would not happen again it was an enormous time to celebrate.

I accepted Jesus as My Saviour the following year at a Christian Rally in the Royal Albert Hall, where the Preacher was a man called Gypsy Smith, his life story is well worth reading.