
End of War

Victory in Europe (VE Day)

On Monday 7th May 1945 an announcement was made that the war in Europe had ended. Tuesday 8th May was to be a day of celebrations - Victory in Europe Day.

There had been a feeling for some time that peace was imminent, so preparations had been made to hold a celebration at short notice. There was time to decorate the buildings with flags and illuminated 'V' for Victory signs.

The Gatehouse Town Council had already discussed, in April, how to greet the returning Prisoners of War.

In May, Major Walter McCulloch of Ardwall was the first Gatehouse man to be released. He had spent most of the war in a German Prisoner of War Camp. The Town Council flew the burgh flag from the Clock Tower in his honour ...and decided to do the same for all other returning POWs.

The morning of Tuesday May 8th 1945, was wet so some of the sporting events for children were held over until Wednesday but other events, such as a parade took place.

The church services at Girthon and Anwoth were very well attended.

The dancing in the Town Hall at night was very popular and the bonfire on Vinnie Hill was enjoyed by young and old, but for many it was a time of reflection - to remember those who had died - and the knowledge that the war was still not over in the Far East. Some Gatehouse men were still fighting in Asia or were Prisoners of War.



Frullani's café

The following day Mr Frullani provided free ice cream to children of the town.

There was a parade to Riverside Park led by Balmaghie Pipe Band where sports, dancing and refreshments had been organised. Another dance was held in the Town Hall and the Town Council provided a fireworks display.



Guilio (aka William) Frullani

Victory in Japan (VJ Day)

On 15th August 1945 U.S. President Harry S. Truman announced that the Japanese Government had agreed to comply with the Potsdam Declaration which demanded unconditional surrender of Japan. This date is celebrated as VJ Day in Europe. The surrender document was not signed until 2nd September 1945, so this date is VJ Day in the USA.

A 2-day holiday was declared in Britain to celebrate the end of hostilities.

On Wednesday 15th August the buildings in Gatehouse were decorated with flags and bunting and the church bells rung to celebrate the end of the war. Services were held in both Anwoth and Girthon Churches.

In the evening a dance was held in the Town Hall and Mrs Murray Usher lit a bonfire on Vinnie Hill while 'thunder flashes' and ground flares were lit in High Street.

This parade probably took place on VJ Day.

