



Dear Head Teachers, Principals, Staff and Pupils,

It seems such a long time ago that we started this year's Poppy Appeal and once again we have had considerable success, with the town raising nearly £47,000 this year and our Schools were a very important part of that success.

I would like to personally thank all our Schools and also congratulate the pupils and staff with the help and support of parents, who all help to contribute to such a worthwhile appeal. I have thoroughly enjoyed coming into your school to speak to the pupils and to answer the questions they may have. I am pleased to announce that this year's winners of the Poppy Cup, for their efforts at raising money and for their commitment to Remembrance is Denfield Park Primary School. The Poppy Cup will be presented to them on Friday 17th of January, and I would like to congratulate them for their considerable efforts.

Although our main effort for the year is The Poppy Appeal, we do have other events throughout the year. One of our important roles is to commemorate past conflicts and important anniversaries. This year Rushden and Higham will be commemorating the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day (VE Day) during the period of Friday 8th May to Sunday 10th May 2020 inclusive. Rushden Town Council and Rushden Historical Transport Society will be supporting this three day event and Rushden's iconic Railway Station will be the centre of the event. On Friday 8th May (Bank Holiday) from midday onwards, there will be a street party in the road outside the Goods Shed (John Clark Way), and road closures are to be put in place to facilitate this. The Town Council would like to welcome all members of the public and their families to attend for the day and to bring along picnics, as trestle tables will be provided. They would like as many people as can, to dress in 40's style for the occasion to really give authenticity to the occasion, but of course this is entirely optional. We would be most grateful if this letter can be published on your website so that take-up is popular and this will certainly get the party spirit launched. There will be stalls and other entertainment in and around the Station.

In the evening of the same day (8th May) at St Mary's Church at 7pm, there will be a short service of thanksgiving and around 8pm in the Memorial grounds a beacon will be lit. All are welcome to this service and the beacon lighting.

In order to really involve our schools in this prestigious event, we are inviting schools to bring their choirs to the Station at intervals throughout the day to sing wartime songs and medleys, which everyone can listen to and even join in with when encouraged to do so. Drama can also be involved in some way. If they wish to dress as evacuees, that would be splendid. If you feel your school would like to take part in this event, please could you contact Mr Paul Wilcox, or our Deputy Mayor, Councillor Melanie Coleman at Rushden Town Council on 01933 316216 for further details.

The Rushden Branch of the Royal British Legion are launching a competition for schools to take part in. We would like them to design a string of bunting on the theme of VE Day, the exact size of which I will enclose with this letter in the form of an attachment. Schools and Groups are invited to take part, and one of the pieces of bunting should display the group who has worked on it. The bunting will be judged as a whole piece rather than individual pieces and some of the winning entries may be published in some way for the occasion. Presentations of awards will take place at a later date. There will be three categories: 1) Infants, 2) Juniors and 3) Seniors and Other Groups.

The bunting can be made of any material, collage, painting, computer art, printing etc but should not be too heavy. It can be as long as you need it to be. This bunting will be incorporated into Union Jack bunting and will be displayed on the day at the Station. Finished bunting should be produced by Friday 3rd April (End of Term), so that it can be judged and prepared for display. Please contact me, Lynne Baker on mobile 07709351326 when your bunting is ready for collection.

Kind regards,

Lynne Baker, School Liaison, Rushden Branch Royal British Legion