

## **May 8, 1945 VE Day** submitted by Ernie Piscitello

The day that World War II ended in Europe, May 8, 1945, became known as VE-Day, for Victory in Europe.

My mother, Teresa, was working in her Bonny Beauty Shop at 134 Division Street. Although we had moved to 319 Old Boonton Road 6 months before, following the re-marriage of my widowed mother, I, now 11 years old, spent a lot of time in the storage room behind the beauty shop, and in the nearby home of my mother's parents, Joseph and Ernestine Marcello at 136 Division Street, where she and I had lived previously.

The surrender of Germany had not been unexpected because of the rapid military advances the Allies had been making against the retreating Germans, but the official announcement over the radio was the spark that started the explosion of celebration. Every bell of every church in Boonton rang and rang with no plans of ever stopping. (I don't think that many, if any, of the churches had amplified electronic bells like many of the churches have today, but I can tell you that the church bell at Our Lady of Mt Carmel had the old fashioned pull-rope.) Every siren in Boonton blew non-stop. Cars drove up and down Main Street blowing their horns, with all windows down, and with convertible tops down, over-crowded people hanging out of them, singing and shouting, and making noises with cow bells and left over New Year's Eve noise makers. People walking, shook hands, patted each other on the back and hugged each other. Sidewalks were full of people going to share the good news with their neighbors. All bars were filled to over-flowing. Liquor stores were doing a booming business.

When I saw what was happening on Main Street, I ran into my grandmother's kitchen and grabbed a cooking pan and a wooden spoon for my "noisemaker". My grand mother caught me and asked me where I was going. I told her, and she gave me an older pan and spoon, because she said I'd lose them (which I did). I can't say how long the party went on, or how many spent the night as guests of the Boonton Police Department, but I'm sure that I was

snug in bed by then. People drove to churches, and prayed at home to say their prayers of thanks. The War was at least half over.

I feel so privileged to have been able to experience this event, even in my insignificant way.

What a memory.