

1940S STYLE ACTIVITIES



Wedding of W H J Julian and Miss M J Yendall leaving Bugle Chapel, 23/06/1943.

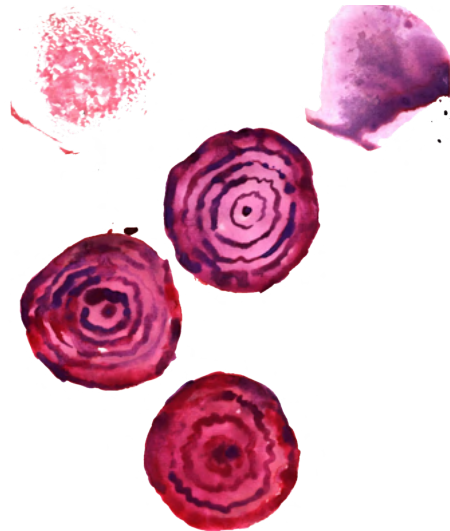
Image credit: Kresen Kernow.

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Activity One: Wartime Rationing and Beauty Hacks

Rationing during the Second World War in the U.K. meant that everyday items were hard to get. Rather than go without, women got creative and used substitutes. Make-up included burnt cork for mascara, cochineal or beetroot juice for lipstick, bicarbonate of soda for deodorant and gravy browning for leg tint! Eyeshadows were hard to come by, so homemade solutions included burning a candle under a saucer to produce a sooty residue, which could then be mixed with petroleum jelly.

Activity: What's the most unusual beauty hack you've tried or heard about? Write or draw in the box below.



Activity Two: Make Do and Mend

During the Second World War clothes were rationed from June 1941 as fabric was essential for war purposes which included uniforms. Make Do and Mend was introduced to encourage people to revive, and repair worn out clothes. Handmade and hand repaired clothes became an essential part of wartime life.

Activity: What's your best tip or advice for looking after clothes so they last a long time?

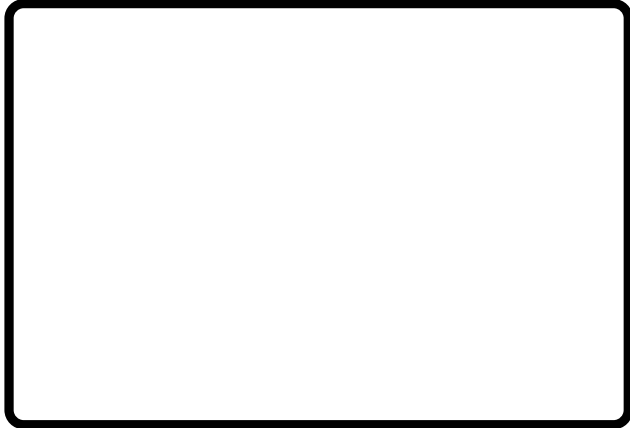


Activity Three: Moustaches

During the Second World War most men wore military uniform of some kind. Hair was short at the back and sides and most men were clean shaven. Post war the handlebar moustache became the symbol of fighter pilots including Actor and former RAF pilot, Jimmy Edwards.



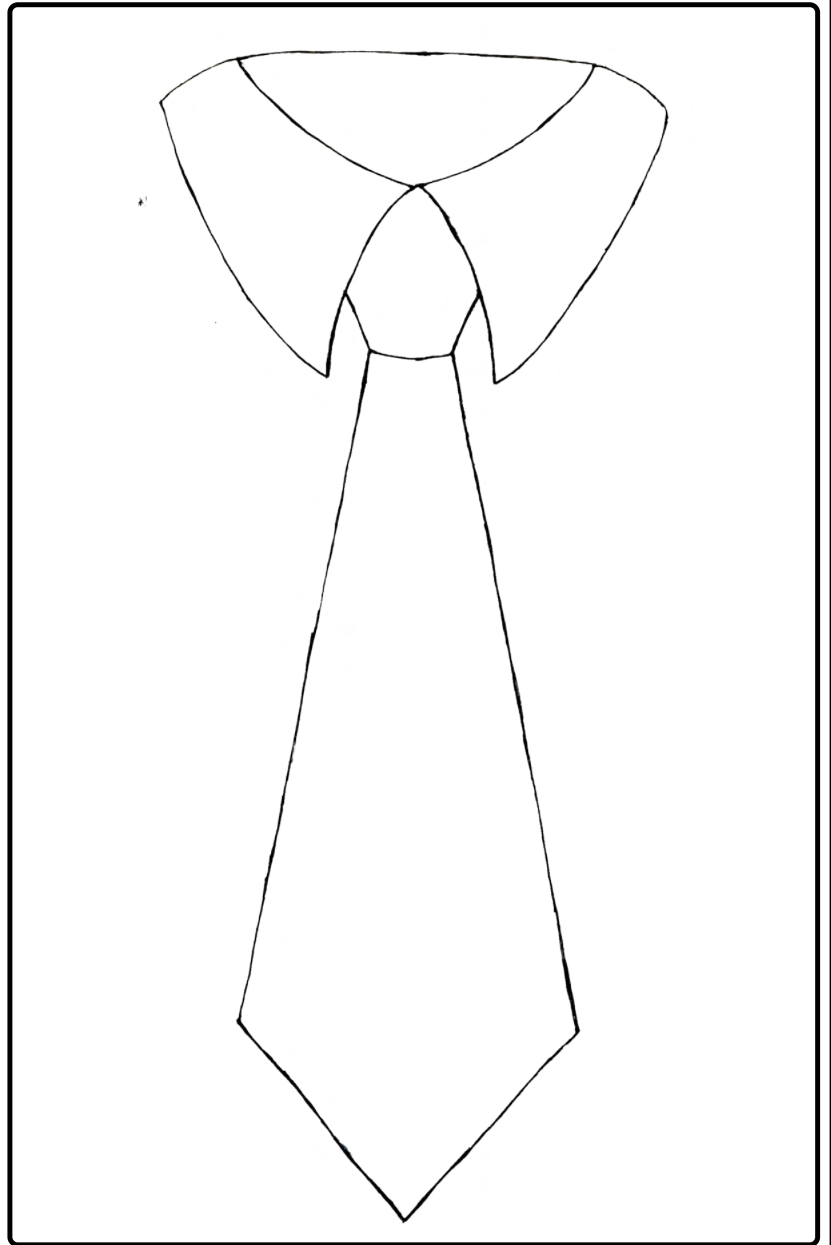
Activity: And the winner for top moustache is... Who had the best moustache that you've ever seen? Describe or draw what it looked like including shape, colour and length. Use the illustrations as inspiration!



Activity Four: Ties

Before the Second World War ties were worn shorter than they are today. Around 1944, ties started to become wider and bolder as they reflected the returning soldiers need to break with wartime uniformity.

Activity: Design your own bold tie which reflects this post war thinking!



Activity Five: Fragrance

During the Second World War manufacturers struggled to cultivate enough flowers for scent production as land was needed to grow food instead. Glass was also scarce, and a lack of alcohol led to an increase in powdered perfumes.

Activity: Fill the fragrance bottle with your favourite smells (write, draw or discuss). What do they remind you of?



Activity Six: Dancing

Dancing wasn't prohibited during the Second World War and was a key part of maintaining morale through its very nature of bringing people together. It was also a way to escape the pressures of wartime life and raise money for the war effort.

Getting dressed up to go to a dance was a popular thing to do during the war years.

Activity: Listen or dance to some big band music. What was your favourite dance? Did you have a favourite piece of music or band? If so, what was it called?



Image credit: Wartime dancing at Blackpool Tower, Britannia and Eve, 1 November 1945

Activity Seven: Hats

Hats were a fun part of a woman's outfit, dressing up their otherwise plain clothes. From the smaller pillboxes and berets to the wide-brimmed. Hairstyles could be easily adopted to fit the hat, or the hat to fit the hairstyle! Popular hats include beret, turbans, pillbox, miniature, or Fedora-style. Hats were a striking accessory meant to complement a hairdo rather than hide it. They came in a variety of colours to brighten up the face as well as classic neutral tones. Men were never fully dressed without a hat and Fedoras & Trilby's were incredibly fashionable!



Activity: What's your favourite hat? Do you remember wearing a hat for a special occasion? Describe where you wore this.

Activity Eight: Accessories

People didn't want to feel as though they were living in a time of austerity during the war and didn't reflect this in their style. Purses and hats were the two biggest accessories for women. Most women wore a belt with their dress, suit, or skirt. Gloves were worn whenever a woman left the house. Accessories were important because of their relative affordability. Men dressed up smart clothing with braces, cravats, and cufflinks for evening occasions.



Activity: What was your favourite accessory? Where did you get it from and wear it?