

Eric the Forgetful Elephant

Contributed by Charlie Steel

This story can be told for Remembrance Day. It connects the idea that like Eric, who wore a red ribbon to remember his uncle, we wear a red poppy to remember the men and women who fought for our freedom.

Eric was like any other elephant. He was big, grey, had large ears and a long trunk. But unlike most of the other elephants, Eric had a very bad memory.

Maybe you've heard of the saying, *An elephant never forgets*? Well, Eric would forget — and quite often. His memory was the pits.

One time, his mother sent him to the general store (a place that has everything) for a loaf of bread, a jar of peanut butter, and the daily newspaper. He came back with a pair of shoes (called loafers), a bag of peanuts, and some paper plates. Yes, Eric had a terrible memory, he even forgot about his best friends Jimmy's birthday one time. The next day when Eric gave Jimmy his present and told him how he forgot Jimmy just shook his head and said "That's OK, I understand. And thanks for the gift."

Now Eric tried everything to remember. He would circle dates on the calendar, but he wasn't always around to look at the calendar. He would put notes on the refrigerator door or on the note board in the kitchen, but he didn't always look at the fridge or the note board. One time his mother even gave him a note of what she wanted at the store, but he forgot where he put it. No matter how hard he tried, Eric always seemed to forget.

One day, Eric's mom came to him with good news. His Uncle Albert was coming for a visit. Now Uncle Albert was Eric's most favourite uncle. He told great stories, loved to play games, and brought wonderful gifts for everyone. Yes uncle Albert was just a lot of fun to be with.

Eric's mom then said, "Your uncle Albert is coming this Saturday on the 12 noon train and you are to meet him at the station." Eric thought "That's five days away. Oh, I hope I don't forget. Not about my Uncle Albert."

Then he went about circling all the calendars in the house, writing notes and putting them on the refrigerator, the note board, and even one on the wall over his bed. Still Eric was afraid that he would forget.

His mother noticed that Eric was looking worried and asked him what was wrong. Eric said, "I'm afraid that I'll forget to meet uncle Albert at the train station. You know how bad my memory is. I've tried everything I could think of: circling the date on calendar, writing notes to myself, but I'm still scared that I'll forget."

Eric's mom smiled and said, "You may not know this, but when I was a little girl I had a very bad memory like yours. I found something that worked for me, now let me see." Eric's mom was wearing an apron, as she usually does, with many pockets on it. After looking in a few of them she pulled out a piece of red ribbon and tied it in on the end of Eric's trunk. Then she said, "Now every time you look at that red ribbon you will remember to meet your Uncle Albert at the train station Saturday at 12:00 noon."

And do you know what! It worked! Eric met his uncle at the train station, and they had the greatest time ever during his Uncle's visit.