

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE BLESMA HOME, PORTSMOUTH,
BY H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER, ON SATURDAY, 30th OCTOBER, 1954.**

Whilst the primary object of Her Royal Highness's visit to Portsmouth is to open the BLESMA Home, the Association and the Board of Management will be concerned only with the arrangements at the Home. The civic authorities will be responsible for reception of Her Royal Highness and party on arrival in Portsmouth and for transport, police control and all the arrangements outside the Home.

DRAFT OF SUGGESTED PROGRAMME OF EVENTS AT THE BLESMA HOME.

Access to the immediate vicinity of the Home will be by invitation ticket only. Arrangements should be made for closing the approaches and Marshals appointed to admit invited guests and direct to assembly points.

2.15 p.m. Guests assembled in groups as follows:-

- (1) Small lawn to right of front entrance path -
Members of Executive Council and Board of Management and their wives. Advisory and Appeals Committee and wives.
- (2) Around the veranda in front of lounge - The Patients.
- (3) The lawns to left of entrance path, leaving space for the official party to visit each group -
The Executive Committee of the "Friends of the BLESMA Home", special guests ~~invited to take afternoon tea in the Home~~, and members of BLESMA branches.
(Chairs and/or forms will be loaned by the City Council).
- (4) In Eastern Parade and Bruce Road -
Wives and friends of BLESMA branch members and "Friends of the BLESMA Home".
(The City Council are considering providing stands for up to 240 people to enable them to see over the garden wall).
(Marshals should be appointed for each group).

2.20 p.m. Explanation of programme.

Introduction of principals and special guests by the National President and the Chairman of the Board of Management.
Greetings to guests. (Microphone to be made available).
Branches (or others) desirous of presenting donations to the Home may do so at this stage.

2.40 p.m. Members of the Board and the Executive Council line entrance path with wives and friends at rear.
The National President and Chairman of the Board take up positions at gate.

2.45 p.m. Her Royal Highness and party will arrive at the BLESMA Home.
(Ample space to be reserved for party to alight and assemble).
The band (if available) will play the first six bars of the National Anthem.
The Earl of Ancaster will present the National President of BLESMA to Her Royal Highness. (If not presented earlier in the day).
The President of the Home will present the Chairman, Alderman A. Johnson (if not presented earlier in the day), who will then present all the members of the Board of Management.
The Earl of Ancaster and/or the National President will present any unrepresented members of the Executive Council and members of the Advisory Committee.

2.53 p.m. The Chairman will present the Superintendent of the Home who, with the Medical Officer, Dr. Emmett, will present the patients.

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- 3.00 p.m. Her Royal Highness and party will proceed along the groups on the lawn.
The Chairman will present the three principal officers of the "Friends of the BLESMA Home".
The National President will present about six outstanding members of BLESMA.
Members of BLESMA's Advisory and Appeals Committee present will follow and greet Area and Branch officers and members.
- 3.12 p.m. Her Royal Highness and party will ascend the steps of the Home. The Hon. Architect, Mr. V.G. Cogswell, F.R.I.B.A., will hand the Key to the Duke of Wellington who will ask Her Royal Highness to declare open the BLESMA Home.
The Lord Bishop of Portsmouth will offer a Prayer and Dedication. A selected patient, preferably the first admitted, will present a bouquet to Her Royal Highness and express thanks on behalf of the patients.
- 3.18 p.m. The party will enter the Home, and the Chairman will present the Matron.
Her Royal Highness will unveil the Commemorative Plaque and sign the Distinguished Visitors Book.
The Chairman, Hon. Architect, Superintendent and Matron will conduct Her Royal Highness round the Home.
- 3.30 p.m. The Matron will conduct Her Royal Highness and the Lady-in-Waiting to the Retiring Room.
~~Guests invited to take afternoon tea in the Home will assemble in the appropriate rooms. (See lists).~~
- ~~3.35 p.m. Afternoon tea.~~
- 3.50 p.m. Her Royal Highness will bid adieu to the principals of BLESMA and the Board and proceed, with official party, to the steps of the Home.
(Cars for Her Royal Highness and party will be drawn up at the front of the Home).
The band (if available) will play "Will Ye No Come Back Again".
The Chairman will lead three cheers for Her Royal Highness.
- 3.55 p.m. Her Royal Highness and party will proceed to the gate and depart.
- 4.00 p.m. Members of the Board and the Executive Council will conduct parties of special guests through the Home, followed by branch members and their wives and friends.

4.55 p.m. The Chairman will present the Superintendent of the Home who, with the Medical Officer, Dr. Lambert, will present the patients.