

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BOURNEMOUTH WAR MEMORIAL HOMES**

Founded in 1948

Shortly towards the end of Great World War 1939-1945 the Bournemouth Council set up a small committee to initiate a scheme for the provision of homes for disabled ex-service people and their dependents where they and their families could pick up the threads of their lives in comfort and security.

The Foundation Stone was laid on October 28<sup>th</sup> 1946 by Admiral the Viscount Mountbatten of Burma, GCVO, KCB, ADC, LLD, DCL

In 1947 the Council arranged for the creation of the Trust Deed which governed the running and control of the future Memorial Homes and they were duly registered as an official charity. A Constitution was set out for a Management Committee to be chaired by HW the Mayor of Bournemouth.

People living in the homes have come from all the services; the Army, the Royal Navy, the RAF, the Royal Marines and the Merchant Navy.

More than half of the residents are from the Army and there have are or have been Ex-service men who have served with such famous regiments as The Black Watch, The Rifle Brigade, the Grenadier Guards, the Coldstream Guards, the Paras, the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, The Queen's Own, the Machine Gun Corps and the Sussex Yeomanry however more than half the residents are from the Royal Hampshires and the Royal Artillery.

A few of our Residents have lived in their homes for 50 years! Our oldest resident is 96 and several are in their 80's including Jock (84) who was a prisoner of the Japanese and worked on the Railway of Death. Because there has been conflicts since the last war we have residents from such areas. Our youngest resident is 38 and served in the Gulf War in 1990 and the N.Ireland and is likely to be with us for many years.

Sadly because of Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan there will never be a shortage of disabled ex-service people requiring our attractive subsidised homes.

We maintain the homes to a very high standard but this is only possible because we have been supported by Service organisations such as the Army Benevolent Fund, SSAFA Forces help and Seafarers.

Our problems increased dramatically when Bournemouth Borough Council decided to cease providing their support, which had been provided for 58 years. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 we were on our own. We had to engage outside services including Solicitors, Accountants, Painters and Decorator, Ground Maintenance Services and others to help us to resolve these various problems. We are facing up to these difficulties and with the generous support from the management team at Castlepoint and other fundraising events **WE WILL OVERCOME!**