

Celebrating our Royal Patronage as we approach the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

June will see the celebration of our Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with celebrations taking place across the country to mark this momentous occasion.

What a great time to revisit Benenden Hospital's past Royal Patronage.

In 1906, Her Royal Highness Princess Christian (daughter of Queen Victoria), laid the foundation stone which you can see in the Pavilion restaurant today.

In 1950, the Benenden Healthcare Society (now Benenden Health) was honoured when Queen Elizabeth, Consort to King George VI, visited Benenden Sanatorium (our hospital) for the first time. The Queen Consort, who had since become the new Queen Mother, had shown interest in the work of the sanatorium, so she was asked if she would become the Society's patron. To everyone's delight, the Queen Mother agreed.

Society Secretary, Joe Fountain requested if it would be possible to have the cover of the Bible in the recently refurbished St Margaret's Church embossed with the Queen Mother's coat of arms. To his surprise, Her Majesty's Private Secretary called on her behalf and agreed to the embossment and even signed it. The original Bible and pen are safely stored at Benenden Hospital.

1965 marked Benenden Health's Diamond Jubilee year and this occasion was the Queen Mother's third and final visit to the recently renamed Benenden Chest Hospital. Her Majesty wrote in the visitor book: "This sanatorium is held in the highest regard and this is a great tribute to those far-sighted men who started this hospital as the Post Office Sanatorium Society."

Jane Abbott, Hospital Director said: "The Royal patron is an important part of our hospital's history and as we celebrate our Queen's Jubilee it is very special to remember our connection with her family. In more recent years, we have been lucky to receive a visit from Sophie, the Countess of Sussex during the hospital's centenary year.

"Our staff take great pride in giving patients the care and compassion to our patients, ensuring they provide first class quality care. They put our patients at the forefront of everything they do.

"I would like to take this opportunity to wish our Majesty the Queen continued good health and many congratulations on this exceptional milestone."

Image of the Foundation Stone

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