

# World War II Day at Beaumanor Hall



During World War II, Beaumanor was instrumental in the effort to break the German Enigma code. The day draws heavily from this rich history to enhance the children's experience.

## Core activities:

**Introduction to WWII History of Beaumanor Hall, Evacuations and Home Front**

### Home Front Rationing

- ID cards – children are issued with and fill out replica Identity Cards
- Children are issued with money, information and ration books, which they will use to plan a meal. They will visit our WWII shop to buy the ingredients and rations they need.

### Radio Room & Decoding

- This is conducted in an original WWII camouflaged radio building
- Children recreate the original purpose of Beaumanor during WWII by listening for secret codes over real radio frequencies
- The second part of this activity involves decoding the messages that come through, as would have happened at places like Bletchley Park

### Air-raid Shelter

- This is a replica public shelter. Children experience what it would have been like during an air-raid. We try to encourage a sense of empathy with real air-raids.
- Songs in the shelter – if time, we sing a range of popular wartime songs and explain their context and relevance.

For schools with 36 – 72 visiting pupils, please split your group into 2

For schools with 73+ visiting pupils, please split your group into 3.

There will be a half hour lunch break when your staff will be required to supervise the children



# Visiting Wartime Beaumanor in Role

It will greatly enhance your day if you, your leaders and your children turn your visit to Beaumanor into a role-playing exercise. In order to maximise the value of your visit you might like to incorporate the following suggestions:

## 1) The Background

The day will be very loosely set around 1940. The children will be evacuees, sent by their parents to Beaumanor to get away from the bombing. You will be their teachers and/or parents, accompanying them (as was actually the case).

## 2) Costume

The cellars are quite cold all year round, so clothing should be warm, whatever the weather. The children could all have a 'luggage label', gas mask box and teddy and anything else they bring with them could be carried in a small suitcase or pillow case.

### a) Girls

- School uniform (if applicable)
- Tights or short white socks and outdoor shoes
- Hair in plaits, bunches, pinned up or neatly brushed. If long enough, could be in 'earphones'

### b) Boys

- Long-sleeved shirt and short trousers, long socks and outdoor shoes and boots.
- Tank top/school uniform, jacket and school cap (if applicable) or cub uniform.
- Favourite teddy bear, games, books etc.

## 3) Packed lunch

Packed lunches should reflect the fact that plastic bags and lunch boxes had not been invented. There were no fast foods and most food was plain, simple, local and rationed.

### a) The food

- cheese sandwiches and/or bread and jam
- bread pudding or fatless sponge (possibly made in school), apples/pears
- ginger beer or old fashioned 'flat' lemonade in a glass bottle (if safe).

### b) The containers

- Wrapped in greaseproof paper and tied up in a plain tea towel or newspaper
- Carried in a cloth satchel or wickerwork basket



## More information

For more information or to book a visit please call **01509 890119** or email [beaumanor.hall@leics.gov.uk](mailto:beaumanor.hall@leics.gov.uk)  
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