

Bottom left: The Opening Of The Filey Holiday Camp Station By The Rt. Hon. Lord Middleton, M.C. at 10.30am on Saturday 10th May 1947 - Courtesy of Butlins Archive Department

Below: The Ballroom - Courtesy of Butlins Archive Department



My Times at Butlin's **By Val Walker of** **Bridlington**

It was May 1945, the war in Europe was over, I was sixteen years old, had completed my education at Newland High School in Hull and was about to start my first job at Butlin's, Filey.

My father, an L & N.E.R. clerk, was already there in charge of organising, with the E.Y.M.S. transportation for the campers from Filey railway station to the camp, every Saturday. My mother was coming with me to work in his office and I was to be employed by Butlin's.

The first day we arrived, my father, along with the head gardener for Butlin's, a Mr Bond, took us on a sightseeing tour of the camp. The whole site was just a sea of mud. Coming towards us were two chaps who stopped to speak to Mr Bond. One of them was a small dumpy fellow in Wellington boots and wearing a battered old trilby. We stepped aside and I asked my father who they were. One was the camp manager and the small dumpy chap - Billy Butlin!

I shared a chalet - G6 - with one of the office girls. I was employed in the Administration Department dealing with campers' enquiries as they arrived. Even though most of them had endured long tedious journeys on trains and buses, they came through the big glass doors happy and smiling, excited at being on holiday.

I volunteered to work late on a Saturday evening because that's when the stars arrived to take part in

the Sunday evening show. I would have their allocated chalet ready for them and the Redcoat on duty with me would take them there.

There were resident artists including the Beverley Sisters, just starting out in their careers. Joy was nineteen years old, the twins, Babs and Teddy, seventeen. Peter Casson, the hypnotist, lived opposite us in the chalet row and became a friend. He put people to sleep on stage, listening to the record "So Tired". Eric Spear and his brother, Roy, ran Radio Butlin's giving out news over the tannoy. Eric Spear's name can still be seen in the credits for Coronation Street. There was a celebrity chef, Joe Velich, who was in charge of the kitchens and the large dining hall - a lovely cuddly character.

For entertainment, there was the bathing beauty contest for the ladies and the knobbly knees competition for the men - wrestling matches in the ballroom - all hugely supported and enjoyed by the campers.

I enjoyed every moment too, but all good things come to an end and mine came in October when the camp closed for the winter - but what a never-to-be-forgotten experience it was - living and working at Butlin's Holiday Camp, Filey.