

# Remember Filey – The Butlins Oral History Project

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You may never have been on holiday there, but for nearly 70 years Butlins has played a major part in the lives of many ordinary British people. Before the rise of package holidays, and worldwide travel, Butlins afforded an annual chance to relax, to socialise, meet new people, and have fun. In 2005, Yorkshire Council's East Riding Arts Development Service received a grant of £43,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to run an oral history project that aimed to document Butlins' Filey camp's history from its opening in 1939 to its final closure in 1983. The project started in September 2005 and ran through until May 2006, when a final exhibition took place in Bridlington, East Yorkshire.

Butlins is a familiar part of British culture and at one time central to the British Holiday

experience and it has been the aim of the project to document the Filey camp's existence in an innovative and accessible format for future generations by researching and recording its unique history.

## ***Developing oral history skills***

The project has given East Riding residents the opportunity to recount their holiday memories from the former camp, which have been captured through the use of photographic, video and audio methods. The grant also enabled artists to work in a local primary school, using the oral histories of Butlins, to increase the children's understanding and appreciation of the local heritage.

Work has also taken place with Seaside Radio - a local community radio station with the aim of engaging local people and encouraging them to develop their oral history skills through training opportunities in interviewing, recording and editing.

The project culminated in a final celebratory exhibition of all the work produced which includes a book of memories with an attached, CD or DVD. Alongside the exhibition was a weeklong community radio broadcast, 'Filey Butlins Remembered with lots of memories gathered during the project. ●

There is a project website at [www.rememberfileybutlins.co.uk](http://www.rememberfileybutlins.co.uk)  
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