

Transcript – Pat's Story

It must have been 1946 when we went there and [we] hadn't really been on holiday during the war only to relatives and things. It was the friend of mine, we were neighbours but we'd always been friends and her sister was going to rent this bungalow at Jaywick - her and her husband had two small children - and they asked us if we'd like to chip in, it meant it was a cheapish holiday.

I remember we had a car to take us all down there and as we were approaching [laughs] there was a thunderstorm, you know, torrential rain but the next morning we got up and the sun was shining and it shone for the whole fortnight! We couldn't believe it, the weather was glorious, as you might go to Spain or somewhere these days. So we just used to have our breakfast and take off, be on the beach all day because the bungalow was practically right on the beach and there was a little cafe on the beach so we used to go and have a coffee or a tea and a bun or something, come back and Edie, the sister, always cooked - don't ask me what we had, can't remember really because we were still on ration.

Then we used to have a bath or whatever and dress ourselves up and walk - no buses - to Clacton - down the Pier can you imagine it? - going to the dances then when the dance was over we'd trip back along the sea wall! And they were always playing this tune *Dancing in the Dark*. Yes so, it was really a lovely holiday.

I don't think I've been back to Jaywick - I may have been just when we visited Ken's sister in Little Clacton. It was funny because when I had a job in Billericay, lady there - Phyllis (we became friends) she had one of these bungalows, she owned it. I think her brother lent her about £25 to put as a deposit and she used to let it out. She took all her stuff from home [laughs] until she finally sold it and bought a bungalow in Kent. So that was a coincidence really.

Freda was my friend from when I moved there but she'd lost her mother and her father remarried and she wasn't very happy [...] but then when she met John who she subsequently married, they finally went to Canada. So I lost touch really which was sad.

Someone had lent me a sundress so I used to wear that practically all day apart from when we went in swimming. Talk about lazy days of summer. That was the first holiday really because I was working. I was in Gosport when war broke out [...] we had to come home early and as we approached London I remember all the balloons were all up and then I was evacuated which wasn't a great success. I was returned home and so I was in Walthamstow all during the war.

As war ended I left school (1945). Then I went to work of course. It was the following summer I was coming up 16 when I started work - I was 17 and a half on this holiday and I met Ken [Pat's husband] when I came back actually, something like that.

It's a derogatory saying now but when I went back to work [...] the managing clerk there, he said "you look like a Wog" - do you remember that [laughs loudly] I don't think I've ever had a tan like that since [laughs]. He wouldn't be allowed to say that now would he?

In the middle of the holiday - their Aunty (she also lived near us) came with her daughter Doreen, they came for part of the time. I remember, [laughs] I apparently used to cut the bread, this Aunty couldn't get over how I used to cut the bread [laughs] because you didn't have sliced bread in those days did you? I suppose I probably had to cut quite a lot! [laughs]

I do remember the bedroom. Freda and I shared the bedroom, there was two little children as well, there was no wardrobes, we hung our clothes round the room on the picture rail [laughs]. There was quite a nice kitchen - I can't really remember an awful lot about it apart from that.