

Sir Billy Butlin

- ¹ Ever been to a Butlin's holiday camp? They are the brainchild of Billy Butlin who was born into the entertainment business and has transformed the summer holidays of hundreds of thousands of families.
- ⁴ Billy Butlin was born in a fairground caravan in 1899 in Cape Town, South Africa. When Billy was eight, his mother left South Africa and brought him to England where they followed his grandmother's travelling fair. Billy didn't get much schooling but his mother made sure that Billy learned his letters and numbers: showmen needed to be able to handle money and to write adverts for the fair.
- ⁹ In 1920, Billy Butlin started his own business as a fairground showman. He was very successful and within a few years was the proud owner of several seaside amusement parks. But he wanted something more. He saw hardworking families come to the seaside and experience boredom and disappointment. Sometimes the places they stayed were dingy, the food was dull and there was little to do in the evening. He began to think about what families needed for a perfect holiday.
- ¹⁵ 1936 saw the opening of the first Butlin's Holiday Camp in Skegness. Families flocked to the resort where they had all the amenities of the seaside combined with bright and comfortable accommodation, plenty of good food and a wide variety of evening entertainment. By 1952, there were six Butlin's holiday camps in the UK offering good-value seaside holidays.
- ¹⁹ Sir Billy Butlin died in his home in Jersey in 1980. Although the camps have changed since his death, they still have the same aim to bring 'a little colour and happiness into the lives of hardworking families'.

An extract from the Butlin's website, www.butlins.com