



The Pierrotters' first season, Brighton 1983



The Pierrotters, Southport 1991



The Pierrotters, Filey 2005



Plus ça change!

## "Oh We Do Like To Be Beside The Seaside!"

This exhibition is the culmination of 2 years' work researching the history and context of seaside pierrot troupes and concert parties on the Yorkshire coast. Over 60 young people have worked alongside archivists, museum curators, digital artists, teachers and The Pierrotters.

During this time, the young people have learned basic archiving and research skills, to create their own displays and exhibitions of the history of itinerant performance in their chosen resort. They learned how to use the museum and library services and also digital recording skills.

The Pierrotters (Britain's last remaining professional pierrot troupe) performed at each of the resorts and the young people filmed their performances and people's reactions to them. They have learned about the practice and process of contemporary performance as well as the historical and social context in which this performance form evolved.

This exhibition is an amalgamation of their research and that of Tony Lidington, who has spent 25 years collecting information and artifacts about the British pierrot/concert party history. He is a leading authority on the subject, as well as being The Reverend Uncle Tacko! of The Pierrotters which he founded in 1983.

This exhibition is a tribute to the 100 years of British seaside entertainment represented by the pierrots.





## Some other Yorkshire venues & troupes...



Ernest Binns' "The Arcadians", Bradford 1919



Tom Coleman's Harrogate Pierrots 1905



Harry Russell's Concert Party, Hornsea (circa 1910)



Catlin's Pierrots, Withernsea 1910

### Bradford

Al Fresco Pavilion Frizinghall

Ben Popplewell's Dandy Militaires 1905-1909

Matt Kilduff's The Sequins 1913

Arcadian Lidget Green

Messrs Browning, Mann & Mitchell Arcadian Cadets 1908

Will Ambro & George Houghton The Debonairs

Ernest Binn's Merry Arcadians (later Royal Arcadians) 1919

Swiss Chalet Undercliffe

Scott Barrie's Chanticleers 1911

The Romps 1912

Phil Howley's Vagrants

### Dewsbury

Grapho & Jackson's Jovial Jollies 1907

### Doncaster

George Burton's Bohemians 1907

Varsity Men & Maids

### Halifax

Howard Stephens Premier Pierrots at Clare Hall Gardens 1906

Harry Thorpe's Pierrots Shay Gardens

### Harrogate

Valley Gardens = Tom Coleman's Harrogate Pierrots

### Hornsea

Roal Bohemians Concert Party 1903

Spot's Jolly Japs 1904

Harry Russell's Cadets and Concert Party 1907-1914

Harry East's Novelties

### Hull

(The Jollybirds 1973)

HE Tadman's The Uniques

### Ilkley

Felix Powell's Pierrots

### Leeds

Potternewton Pavilion

Arthur Gilbert Hart "Arcadians" 1908

The Hunslett Pavilion

The Nuts 1909

Hill Top Pavilion, Armley tram terminus

EC O'Brian Butterflies 1909

Olympia Rink, Roundhay

Frankland Gray Comets 1909

Harehills Pavilion

Scott Barrie's Chanticleers 1910

Bramley

Tommy Ellwood's Leeds City Pierrots

Athletic Ground, Headingley

Arthur G Hart's Pierrots 1907

### Rotherham

Clifton Park

### Sheffield

Glen Howe Gardens, Wortley

### Wakefield (Grand Pavilion, Lofthouse Park)

Arthur Correlli's Merry Men 1907

### Withernsea

Catlin's 1904-1911?

Joe Ellison's Entertainers 1912

Merry Mascots Horace West's Night Lights 1922/1923

Frank A Terry's Super-Optimists 1929

Bits 'O Brightness 1923

Doug Cranston's Epics

Bert Grapho's Jovial Jollies 1920's

Mac's (Andrew McAllister's) Supremes

The Lavender Club

Teddy Man's Folly Folk

The Fun Employed 1929

Uncle Terry's Showbox 1932

Al Needham's Whirlwind Follies 1936

Charlie O'Neil's Pierrot Pie 1938

(Florence Coverdale's Hollym Follies 1962 )

*...Do you know of any other venues or troupes? If so, please let us know!*



## Famous Pierrots

There were many famous artistes whose careers began in pierrot and concert parties. The Pierrotters are the last-remaining professional troupe in Britain and the last vestige of a huge industry which employed hundreds of thousands of entertainers in its 100 year history. Seaside resorts would boast of 3, 4 or even 5 different troupes all vying with one another for the favour and attention of the holidaymakers: between 1890 and 1930, there were over 500 professional troupes working the seaside and included many famous names such as Max Miller, Arthur Askey, Stanley Holloway and Leslie Crowther.

The Pierrot concert part was the main way in which young entertainers broke into the profession - the industry was an apprenticeship, the Edinburgh Fringe, the stand-up club and indie pop chart of its day, they were The Boyzone or High 5 of their age, indeed even the names of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century groups such as The Merry Japs, The Imps and The Moths seem to presage pop groups such as The Happy Mondays, The Pixies and The Beatles.

In seaside entertainment, young entertainers could cut their teeth and look for a big break and old stagers found a staple income in the Summer, between variety engagements, touring repertory and pantomime. This hotch-potch of itinerant entertainment is a way of life familiar to showmen and women in Britain for centuries and has preserved a continuous line of family-orientated music, variety and comedy which we still enjoy today.



Benny Hill and Tony Hancock both started in seaside concert parties



Max Miller (top right) in Jack Sheppard's Concert Party, Brighton 1919



Arthur Askey in "The Filberts" 1924



Gillie Potter in Wallis Arthur's Pierrots, Bognor



Stanley Holloway in "The Co-Optimists"



## The Pierrotters & Now



The Pierrotters by The West Pier, Brighton 1987

The Pierrotters are the last vestige of a huge industry which employed hundreds of thousands of entertainers in its 100 year history.

The Pierrotters were formed in Brighton in 1983 and named after the rotting "West Pier" whose restoration they continue to support. They are now one of the country's longest-serving al fresco street bands.

Inspired by the energy and direct approach of Punk and the absurdist nonsense of Monty Python and The Bonzo Dog Band, the 1980's saw the start of a movement that has now become known as "street arts": The Pierrotters emerged at the same time as groups like Pookiesnackeburger, The Peace Artistes and The Fabulous Salami Brothers - busking, playing on streets and providing cabaret slots in the developing new comedy circuit.



The Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band



The Fabulous Salami Brothers

The Pierrotters mix whimsical nostalgia with contemporary buffoonery - combining traditional vaudeville songs such as The "Sun Has Got His Hat On" and music hall recitations such as "The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God" with adaptations of rock classics such as Slade's "Cum On Feel the Noize". The Pierrotters' material is drawn from the grand tradition of 20th century popular culture, from the music hall through thirties swing to fifties rock'n'roll and beyond. This tradition is a direct continuation of an oral culture which is now termed "folk music": melodies and lyrics known by everyone (whether that is from television, radio, the stage, playground) and which speak to all regardless of their background or interests.

Their music and comedy continues a line of British urban folk that comes from music hall, through variety and concert party, to skiffle and pop with bands like The Kinks and Ian Drury & The Blockheads, right through to the present day with the Streets and The Coral.



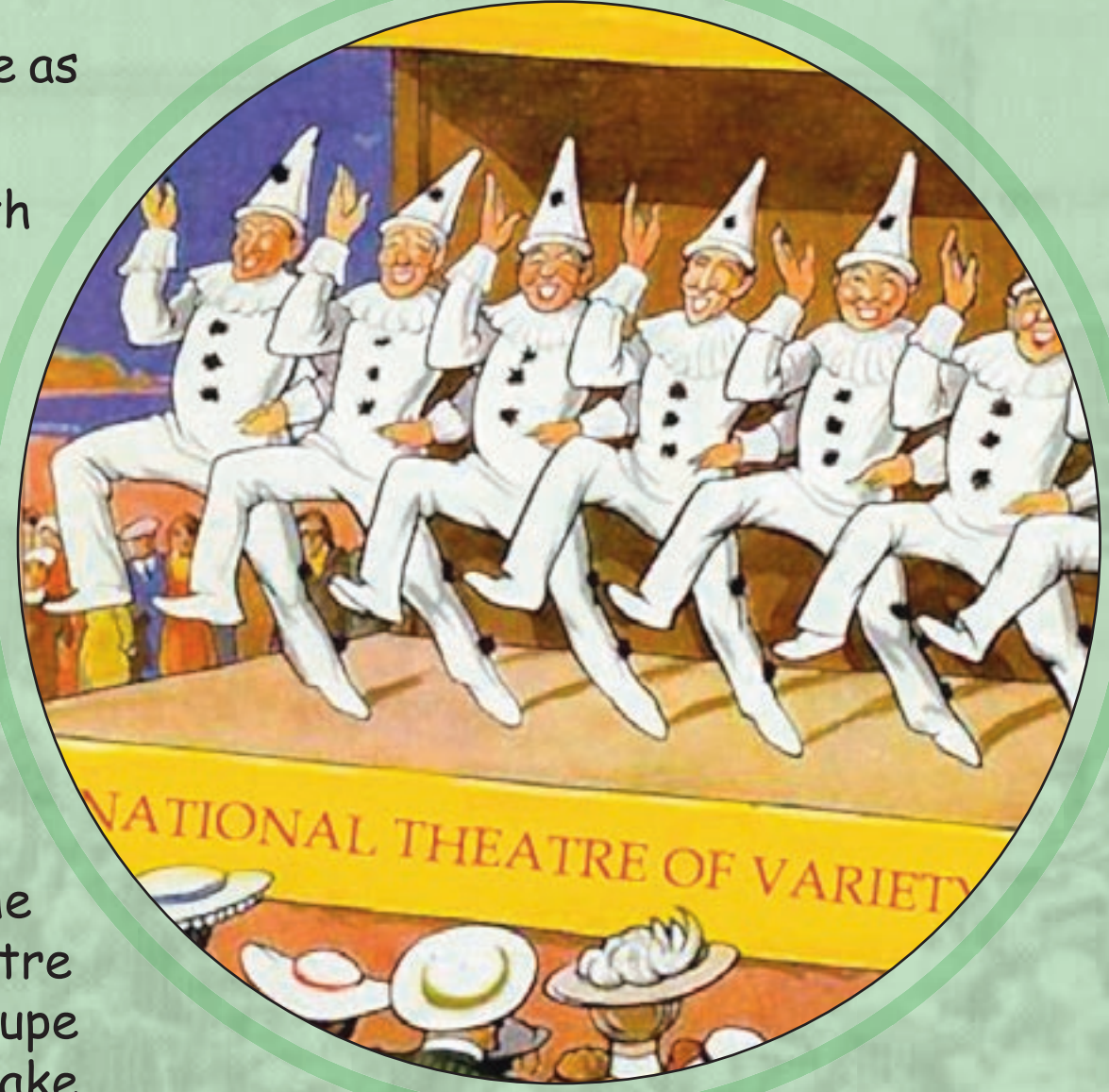
Slade



Indeed, The Coral even borrowed Uncle Tackol's picture as the central image for their hit record "Skeleton Key"!

As a result of this unique blend of the historical with contemporary interpretation and their universal appeal, The Pierrotters have played at many of Britain's large and small seaside resorts and most of the major arts festivals. In 1992 the group performed abroad for the first time as representatives by the British Council in Krakow, Poland and subsequently even been as far as the tropical paradise of the Isle of Wight!

In 2005, the founder of the troupe, Uncle Tackol! was invited to Buckingham Palace to meet Prince Philip and Queen Elizabeth II, in recognition of his contribution to British music. Then in 2006, The Pierrotters launched The National Theatre of Variety at Blackpool Grand Theatre as the last remaining, professional, seaside pierrot troupe - it's amazing how far 12 chords of thrash banjo can take you!



The National Theatre of Variety



Just A Verse & Chorus 1985



The Pierrot Promenaders, Isle of Wight 1986



The Pierrotters, Filey 2005

There have been some other short-running examples of seaside pierrot troupes - Roy Hudd toured Just A Verse & Chorus in 1985, The Pierrot Promenaders had a season on the Isle of Wight in 1986 and there is a young group in Bridlington called The Bridlington Buttercups, but to date, there are no other professional troupes to maintain the tradition. Our hope is that this exhibition will stimulate memories and inspire a new generation of seaside performers.

Our true home remains by the seaside, where the land ends and everybody, of whatever age, abandons their traditionally British reserve and plays wildly and eccentrically in the pursuit of fun. Pierrot troupes were and The Pierrotters are an essential part of that world.



## Costume & Make-up

The pristine image of the pierrot troupes was essential to their success: Will Catlin was renowned for ensuring that all his costumes were cleaned and pressed every day. Indeed, even when the fashion for the black and white pierrot troupes started to wane, they were replaced by what was often called a "costumed



Pedrolino in the Commedia dell'Arte



A pierrot by  
Jean Antoine  
Watteau



Charles Deburau



A Victorian circus clown



Will Catlin



Jean Louis Barrault as  
Baptiste in the film Les  
Enfants Du Paradis



The Waterloo Pierrots

concert party" which might be blazers & boaters, or even glamorous top hats & tails like the Fol-de-Rols. The clown white used for pierrot troupes was made from a compound of animal fat and zinc oxide - an unfortunate combination that would go "off" easily and even caused skin cancer! Few pierrot troupes have such strong make-up as that of The Pierrotters, but theirs is mercifully water-based and safe!



The Rotters & Nephew



# Catlin's

The instruments needed to be suited to the outdoors - loud and clear! But they were also entirely acoustic as there was no means of artificial amplification. The most common form of accompaniment to their singing voices was a piano, but in order to be more portable, many used harmoniums or accordions instead.



The Waterloo Pierrots, Bridington, with harp & piano



Note Tom Carrick's use of banjos and mandolins for a loud acoustic sound

Songs might be written for the troupe, but they would also sing popular songs from the music halls. At the turn of the Twentieth Century, gramophones were still rare, so the way most people most became familiar with their favourite troupe's material and image was to buy their sheet music (including patter) and postcards-which

also helped the pierrots boost their 'bottle'.



Catlin troupe at Withernsea

## CATLIN'S



### ROYAL PIERROT ENTERTAINMENT

Two and a half hours continuous enjoyment without vulgarity. . .

Songs, Dances, Duets, Trios, . . . Quartettes, Quintettes, Sextettes, Comediettas and Operettas . . .

Repertoire comprising over 300 Items. . . . .

. Change of programme nightly.

OR ADMISSION

A typical pierrot programme

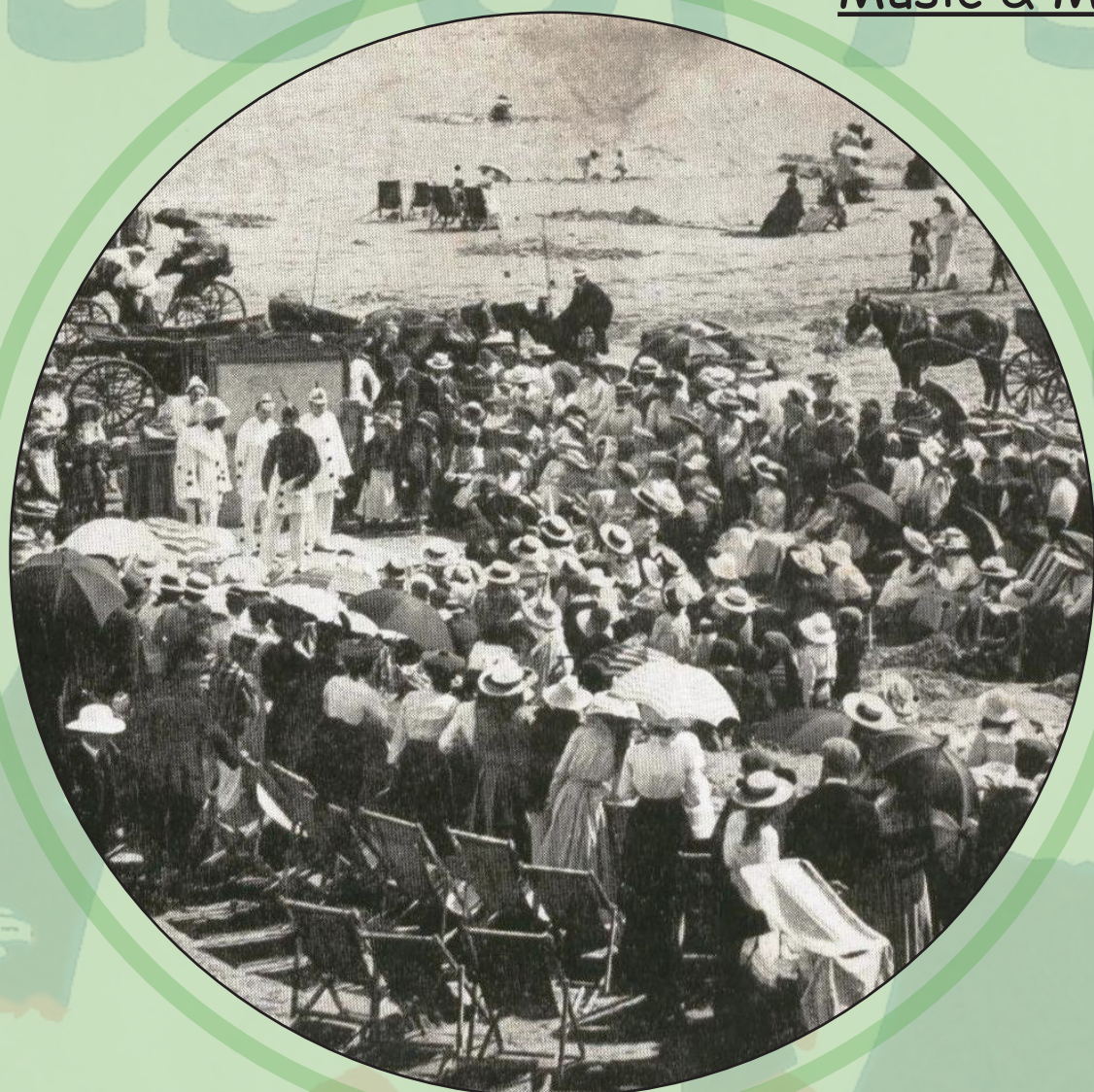
The comedy of the pierrots was simple and family-orientated with no smut or innuendo. Similarly, the music was accessible, fun and often encouraged the audience to join-in.

# programme.



# ALBUM of SONGS

## Music & Material



Andie Caine's Royal Pierrots, Filey

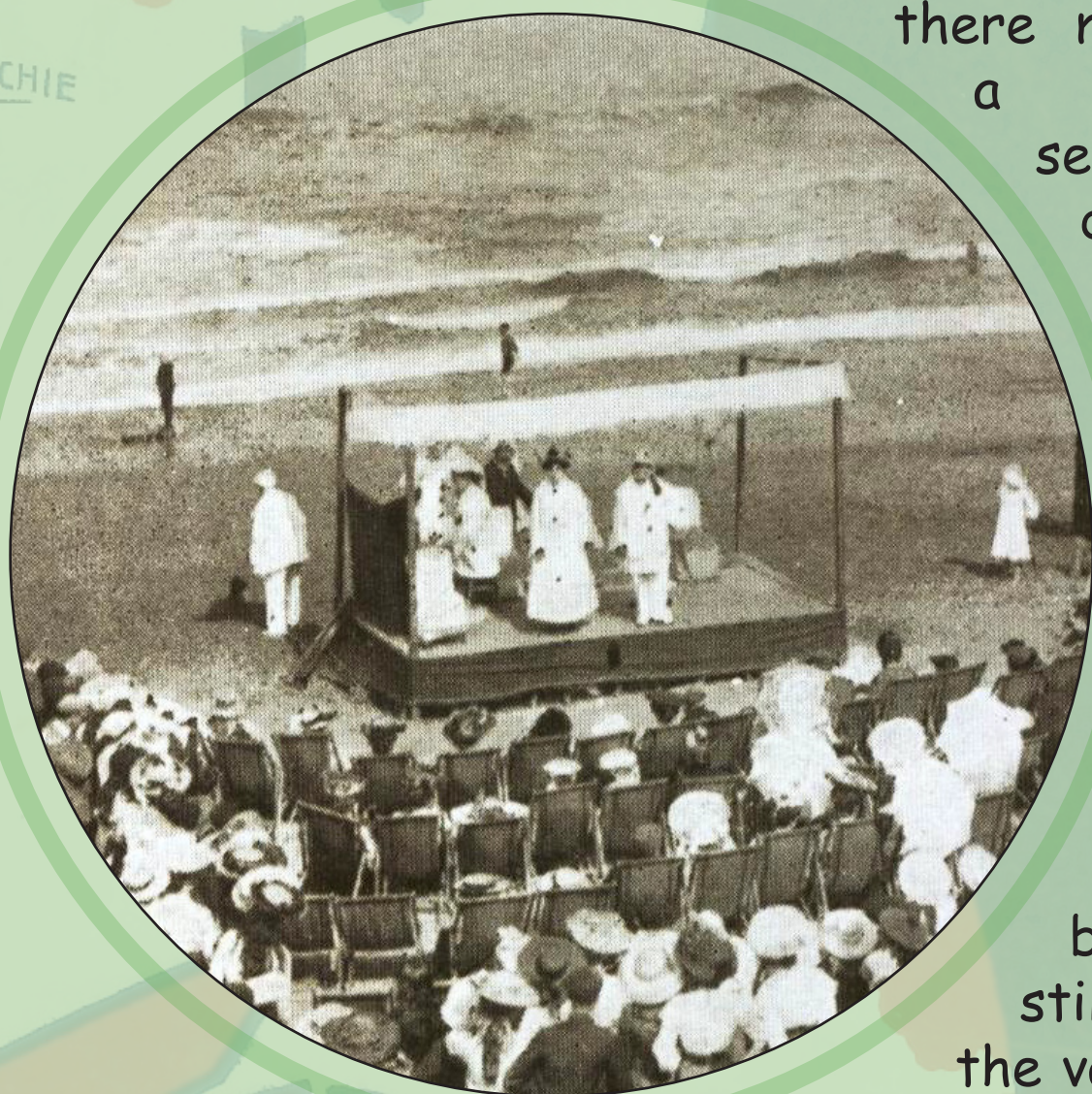
The pierrots provided live, acoustic entertainment in an age before mass media: in the mid-Nineteenth Century, the working classes began going to the seaside in droves, creating a ready market for entertainment. Artistes who worked the halls in towns and cities suddenly had a new audience to target and the opportunity for regular employment during the summer months.



Uncle Tacko! "bottling"

The early troupes earned their money by busking: this is still known as "bottling", which refers to the practice of making a slot in the side of a bottle for coins, preventing the money from being removed until the end of the "take", when the bottle was smashed and the coins shared-out. In front of the "pitch" (or

performing area), there might be a roped-off section with deckchairs, for which a higher price would be charged.



The Pierrots, Whitby  
Note flimsy nature of the "tilt"

As pierrots gained in popularity and the pierrot "Guvnors" invested in the acts, they would construct small stages with canopies or 'tilts': but they were still subject to the vagaries of the weather and would often have to post a sign - "if wet under pier".



Will Catlin would make his troupes travel around the resort in an open-topped charabanc to advertise his shows

Pierrot troupes were expected to perform three times daily throughout the season (excepting Sundays) - usually once in the morning and two in the afternoon. In addition, they would often also be required to market the show by greeting trippers at the station and advertising along the promenade.

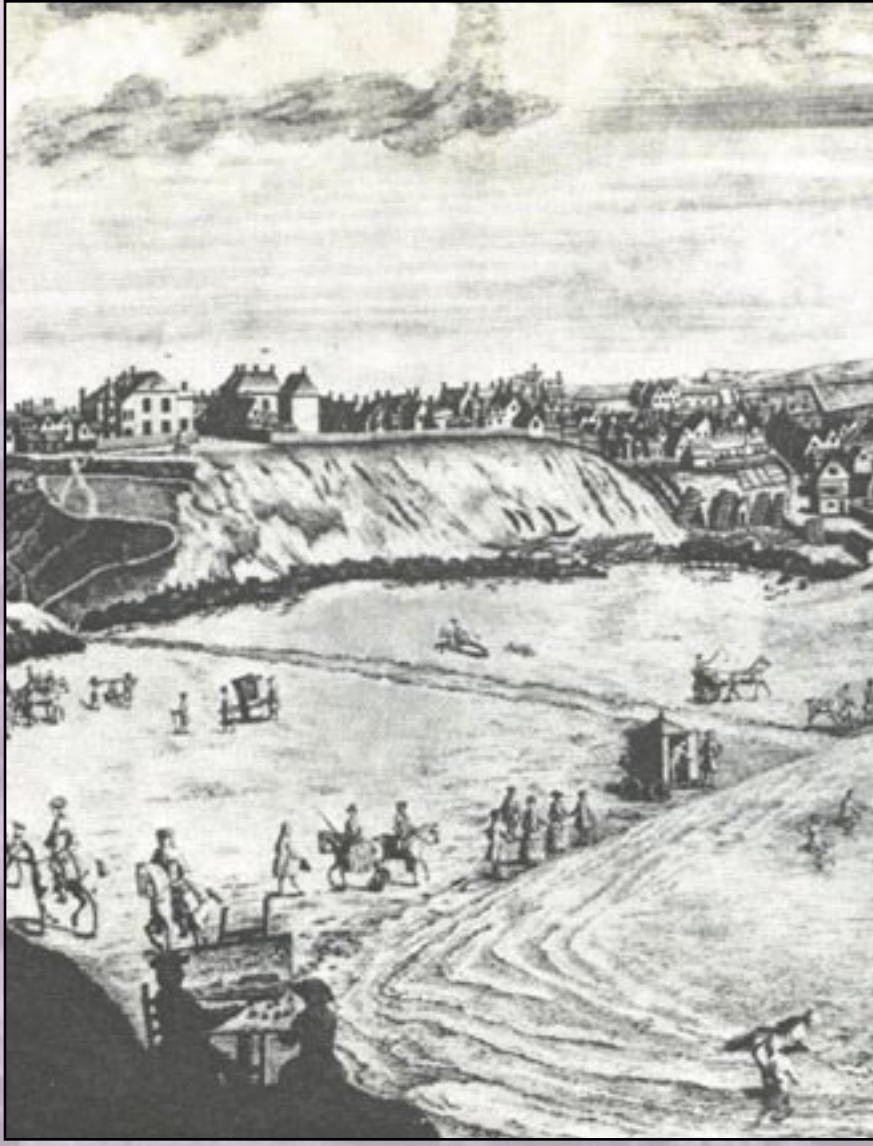
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## The History of the Seaside



Scarborough 1735

"It cleanses the stomach, opens the lungs, cures asthma, and scurvey, purifies the blood, cures jaunders (sic), both yellow and black, and the Leprosie; it is also, withal, a most sovereign remedy against Hypondriack, Melancholly, and Windiness".

Such declarations convinced other doctors and their patients that both drinking and bathing in sea-water provided a complete cure for every condition and the patronage of the seaside by the Prince Regent in the 1790's meant that everyone aspired to the healthy, wealthy lifestyle epitomised by the seaside resort.



The Prince Regent ("Prinny") by James Gillray

In the Eighteenth Century, Britain was still a rural society - most people still lived in very poor conditions in the countryside and the majority of work was available on the land or in small village communities. The industrial revolution enabled the development of mass production in factories and concentrated the workforce into urban centres where there was access to power, raw materials and good transport facilities.

The resorts themselves had been made fashionable in the Eighteenth Century as Spa Towns because of their health-giving properties: as early as 1626, the russet-coloured water that seeped from the Scarborough cliffs were announced as having revitalizing properties, as Dr Whittie announced a century later:

A  
DISSERTATION  
On the USE of  
**SEA-WATER**  
IN THE  
DISEASES of the GLANDS.  
PARTICULARLY  
*The Scurvy, Jaundice, King's-Evil, Leprosy, and the Glandular Consumption.*  
Translated from the *Latin* of  
**RICHARD RUSSEL, M.D.**  
THE THIRD EDITION, Revised and Corrected.  
To which is added,  
A COMMENTARY ON SEA-WATER,  
Translated from the *Latin* of  
**J. SPEED, M.D.**  
Both by an EMINENT PHYSICIAN.  
**L O N D O N :**  
Printed for W. OWEN, at *Homer's Head, Temple-Bar.*  
MDCCLV.

The development of the railways from the 1840's onwards (Scarborough's railway arrived in 1845), meant that large numbers of people could be moved swiftly and cheaply to a variety of destinations, including the seaside resorts.

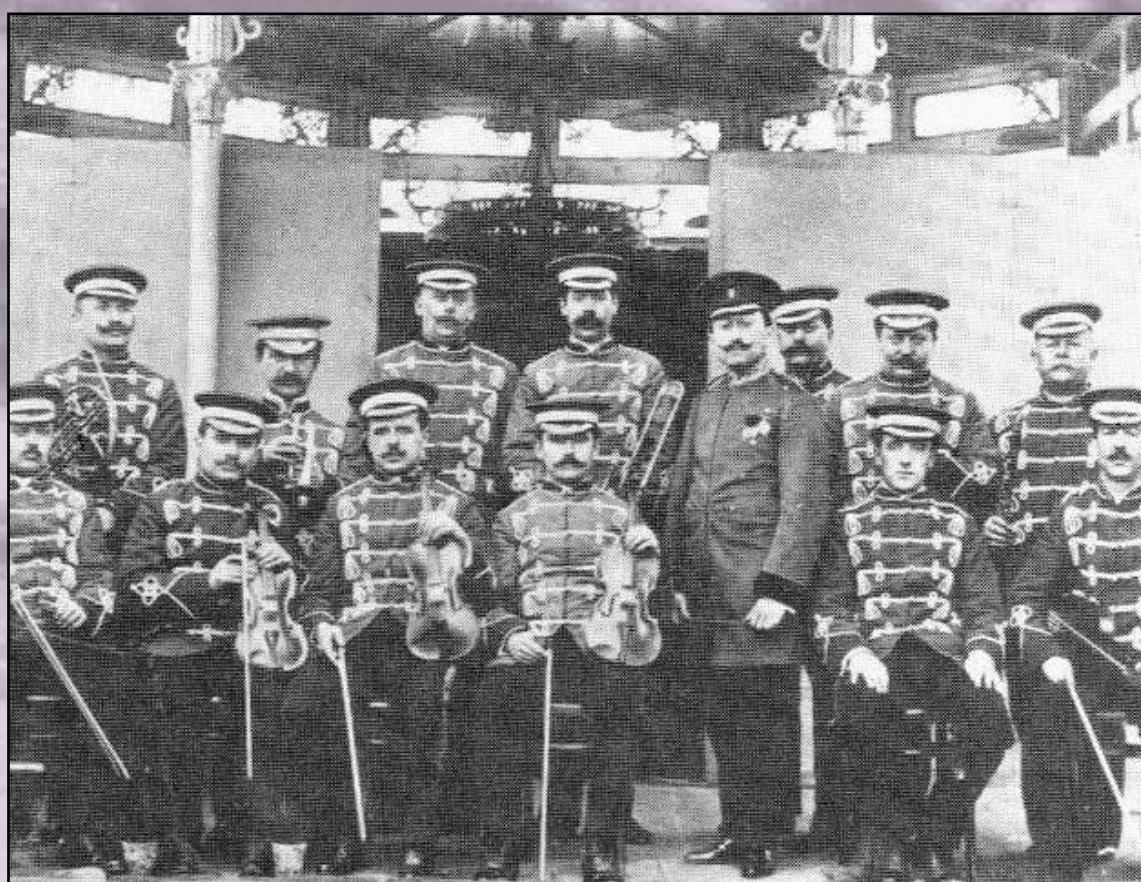
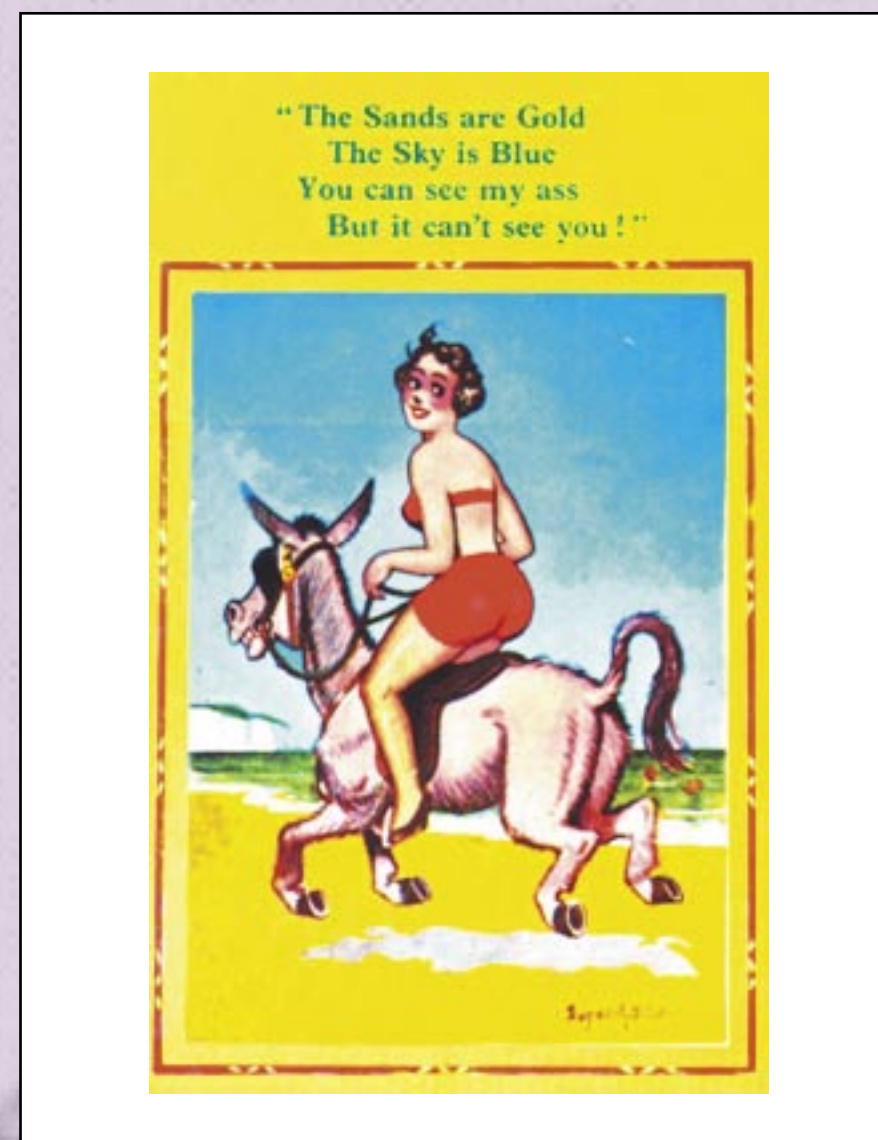
Then, in 1871, the Bank Holiday Act introduced the concept of holidays with pay, with national holidays created on Boxing Day, Easter Monday, Whit Monday and the first Monday in August. This meant that huge numbers of mill workers, especially from the West Riding, were able to take holidays without losing their jobs, although it wasn't until the Holidays With Pay Act of 1938 that employers were compelled to give their staff paid leave.



The trippers came to the seaside for the health-giving properties of sea-bathing, fresh air (or "ozone" as they called it) and adventure. The seaside has always been a place of exotic excitement, ever since the Prince Regent created the astonishing pleasure dome of Brighton Pavilion in the early Nineteenth Century.

This giddy atmosphere of innovation and thrill has continued throughout the history of the British seaside: it is at the seaside that inventions are first tried-out - the first electric railway, the first electric lighting, technological feats such as Blackpool Tower, the incredible engineering achievements of the seaside pleasure piers, the largest ferris wheels, the sauciest What the Butler Saw machines, the newest arcade games and even today extreme water sports such as parascending or kiteboarding.

It is also where romance and sauciness abound: the seaside is a great leveler: class, social standing and wealth are



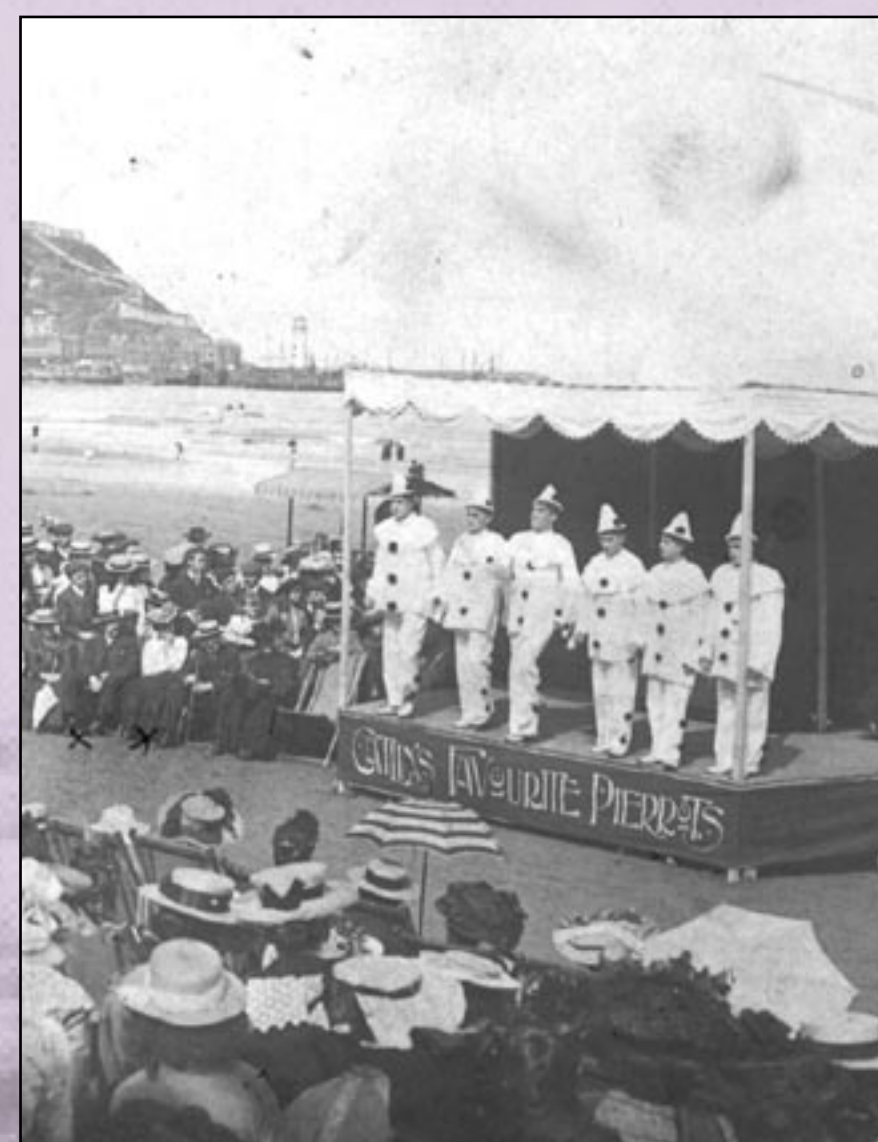
Julian Kandt's Famous Band - New Spa Bridlington 1910

meaningless when sunbathing in a bathing costume or dripping from a dip in the sea. The seaside postcard tradition of illicit liaisons and embarrassing situations is akin to the seaside experience itself - clothes and inhibitions are abandoned, which makes us anonymous and vulnerable at the same time.

It was in this context that the holiday audiences went to see the wide range of seaside entertainers: Punch & Judy, donkeys, German bands (who advisedly changed their name to "Oompah" or "brass bands" with the advent of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War), beach orators, jugglers, barrel organs, trick cyclists, escapologists and many, many more.

The pierrot troupes and concert parties were special because they directly engaged with their audiences: theirs was not a "speciality act" or solo demonstration of skill, their performances were, by nature, "concerted" - an ensemble of family fun designed specifically for the holiday crowds. In style, form and content, they were perfectly adapted for the British seaside and because of this, they were fantastically successful until a new era heralded their demise with the development of cheap airflights, package holidays and the disruption of social behaviour brought about by the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War.

The pierrots and concert parties were one of Britain's last oral cultures - little is recorded in book or paper form, let alone on film or tape, but as can be seen by the postcards of the era, they were hugely popular and an essential constituent of our cultural heritage.



Scarborough 1903



## The Early Years

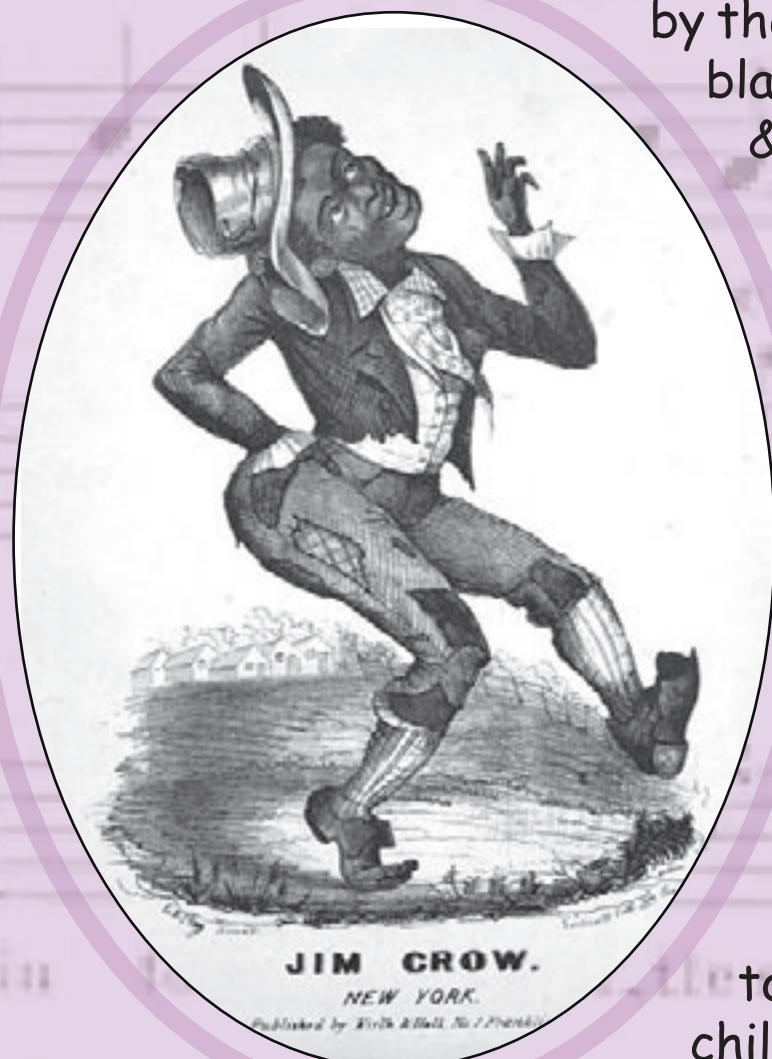
The sands and promenades of the seaside have always provided a focus for entertainment and entertainers: the so-called "Nigger Minstrels" were the most common form of entertainer on the beach. They were part of an itinerant showman profession which followed the new mass market of holidaymakers to the seaside. The railways brought the working classes en masse from the factory towns, whose hedonistic intentions and holiday cash meant opportunities for people to make a summer season's income through entertainment at the seaside.



The minstrel tradition in Britain was inspired

A typical seaside minstrel troupe, Scarborough

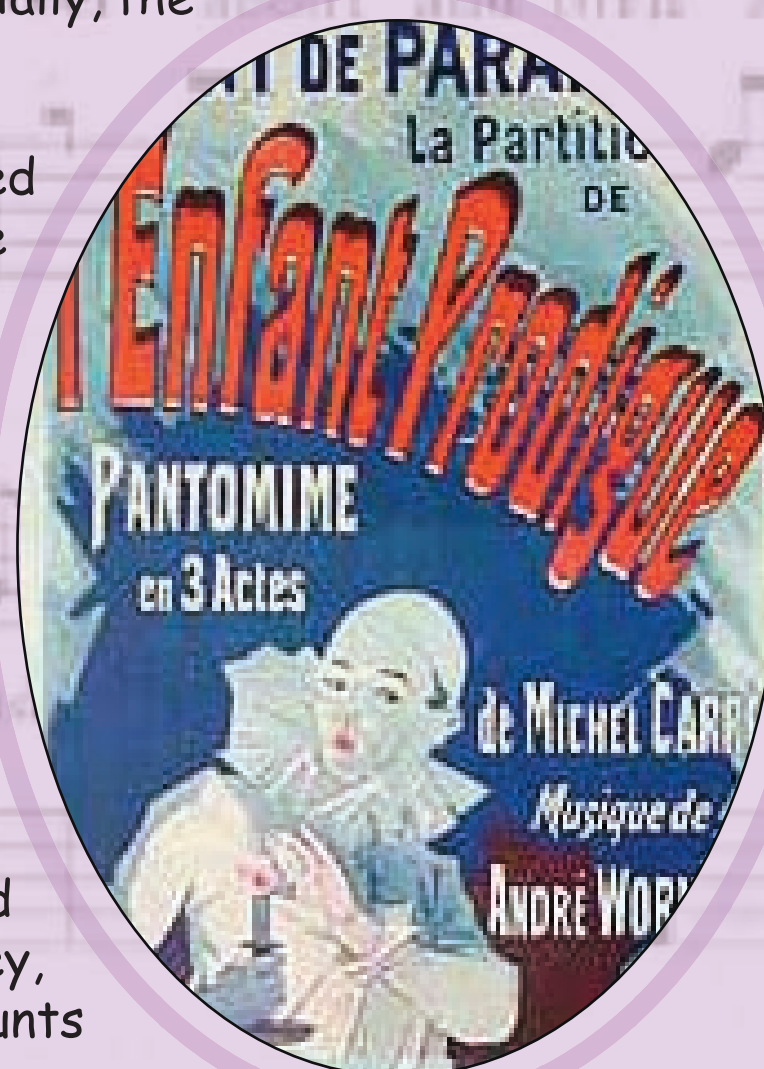
by the American vaudeville act of Thomas Dartmouth Rice: he was a white man who blacked-up using burnt cork and performed a parody of Black American song & dance with "Jump Jim Crow" and the dandy "Zip Coon". He toured England with great success in 1836 and started a vogue for troupes of minstrels. From the 1830's, minstrel shows were a significant part of programming for commercial music halls and the popular entertainment of the streets.



They were all-male outfits, who sang songs (either solo or concerted), played instruments (usually fiddle, banjo, bones and tambourine) and told cross-talk jokes & recitations. Usually dressed in tailcoats, wide trousers and boaters or top hats, they would sit in a semi-circle with a comic at either end (known as "corner men") and in the centre was Mr Interlocutor - a dignified, ordering presence who acted as MC or compere to the turns. There would be a couple of tambourine players in the semi-circle called "Tambos", another couple known as "Bones" for their instrument - one of whom would add the soubriquet "Uncle", whose role was to relate directly with the audience especially, the children.

Between 1840 and 1890, the minstrels were unrivalled as entertainers at the seaside, but a direct challenge to their position came in 1891, when a banjoist called Clifford Essex, created the first troupe - The Pierrot Banjo Team.

In 1890, a French production ran at the Prince of Wales' Theatre in London called "L'Enfant Prodiges": billed as a pantomime in 3 acts, it had no words and featured a family of pierrots in traditional Italian/French costume. It is believed that Clifford Essex saw the production and decided to create a high quality, peripatetic, al fresco, banjo-based act that could perform at society events. He duly enlisted Jimmie Blakely (comedian), Will Pepper (2<sup>nd</sup> banjo), Miss Dewhurst (soubrette & strill) and performed a first Summer season in 1891 at the Henley, Ryde & Cowes Regattas. As Essex recounts (BMG February 1905):



"You know it commenced almost as a joke at Henley Regatta in 1891. Then at Cowes Regatta, shortly afterwards, on our third night, we had a command performance before the then Prince (later Edward VII) and Princess of Wales, who were so pleased that we were commanded to give another show on the very same evening."

As a result, they changed their name to "Clifford Essex's Royal Pierrots".

The "Royal Pierrots" subsequently played on Sandown beach at the opposite end from their rivals "The Victoria Minstrels": the pierrots proved more popular than the minstrels and in a microcosm of what was to happen throughout the country, they ousted them from the pitch.



Clifford Essex's "Royal Pierrots" 1894  
(this is the earliest known image of a pierrot troupe)

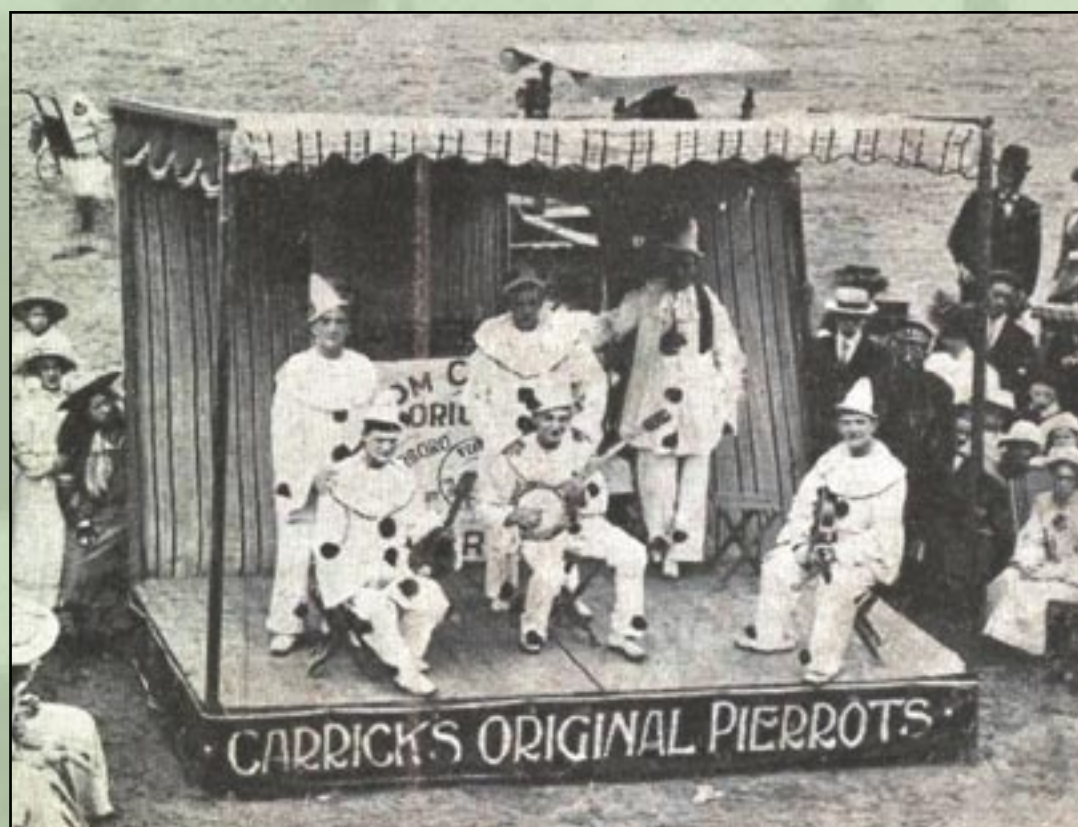


## The Life Of A Pierrot Troupe



"The Waterloo Pierrots", Bridlington 1912

Early troupes earned their money by busking (performing and then asking the audience for money), which they distributed on a profit-share basis. This is known as "bottling", which refers to the early practice of making a slot in the side of a bottle into which the audience was encouraged to put their halfpennies and pennies. The slot meant that the money could not be removed until the end of the "take", when the bottle was smashed and the coins counted ready to be shared-out. Nowadays, buskers usually use bags or hats, but still refer to the take as "the bottle".



South Sands, Scarborough 1903

As they gained in popularity, they would construct small stages with canopies: but they were still subject to the vagaries of the weather and would often have to post a sign - "if wet under pier" and in heavy storms could even be swept-out to sea. Tom Carrick's troupe at Scarborough once tried to rescue their small stage from the sea whilst still in full costume & make-up!

The pierrot troupes were expected to perform three times daily throughout the season (excepting Sundays) -usually once in the morning and two in the afternoon. They would often also be required to drum-up audiences by greeting trippers at the station or advertising along the promenade. Evening performances became popular, especially if electric lighting was available.

When the pierrots took over from the minstrels, they performed in the open air or "al fresco" on a bit of hard standing, the promenade or boards laid down for the purpose. Permits were usually required for artistes to perform in the resorts and towns and these were issued by the police: a typical rate before the First World War was 1 shilling a week per performer (or "a-bob-a-knob-a-week", as it was known!) In addition to this, the "guv'nor" (or pierrot impresario) would have to pay a seasonal rent for any permanent pitch on the beach or promenade.





## Whitby

Whitby has always been a port that mixed fishing and holiday-making.



Joe Mulvana's Minstrels 1908

Joe Mulvana's Minstrels were the first troupe to be seen in Whitby around 1880 - indeed they were the first minstrel troupe on the Yorkshire coast.

After his successes in Scarborough, Will Catlin tried a troupe in Whitby on the West Cliff, but

the snobbish residents complained that the pierrots

lowered the tone of the neighbourhood and they were forced to return to the foreshore.

In the 1907 season, one of the most famous names in concert party history - George Royle, brought a troupe from Blackpool to Whitby. He changed their name from "The

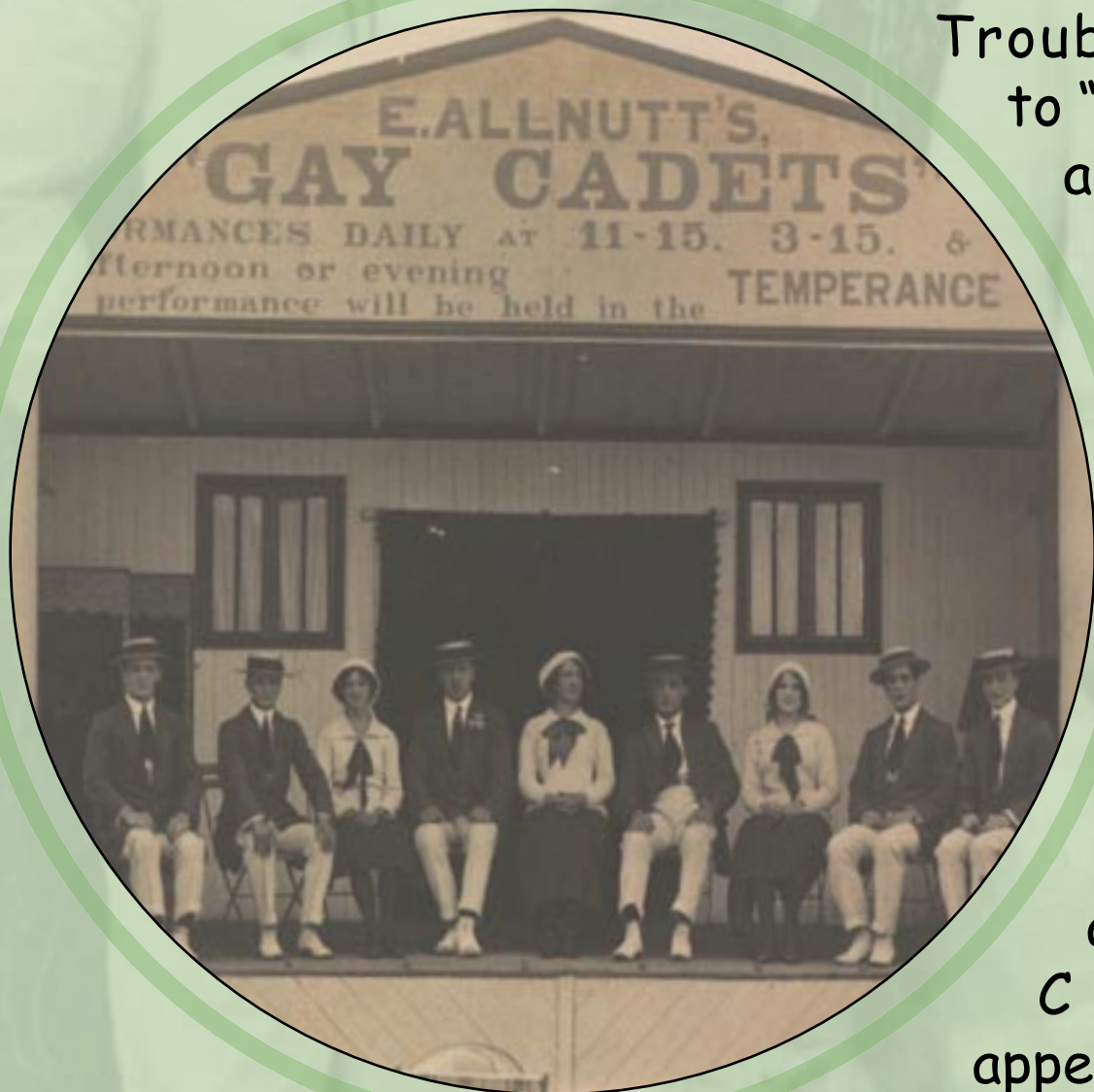
Troubadours" to "The Imps"

and in later years, moved them

to Scarborough under another title "The Fol De Rols". They became the most glamorous and long-lasting of all British concert parties, performing continuously until well after the Second World War.



Mr George Royle's "Imps" 1910



Edward Allnutt and his "Gay Cadets" appeared in

Whitby for the first time in 1911,

staying for 4 seasons until the outbreak of the Great War. Leslie Fuller's "Pedlars" concert party also appeared at this time, and his brother, Dave Fuller, produced a forces' concert party in Normandy named "The Ped'lars". In 1919, they returned to Whitby and continued performing throughout the 20's and 30's.

"The Bouquets" concert party directed by Murray Ashford and Wilby Lunn ran in the Whitby Spa Theatre from the 1920's right through until the 1960's.



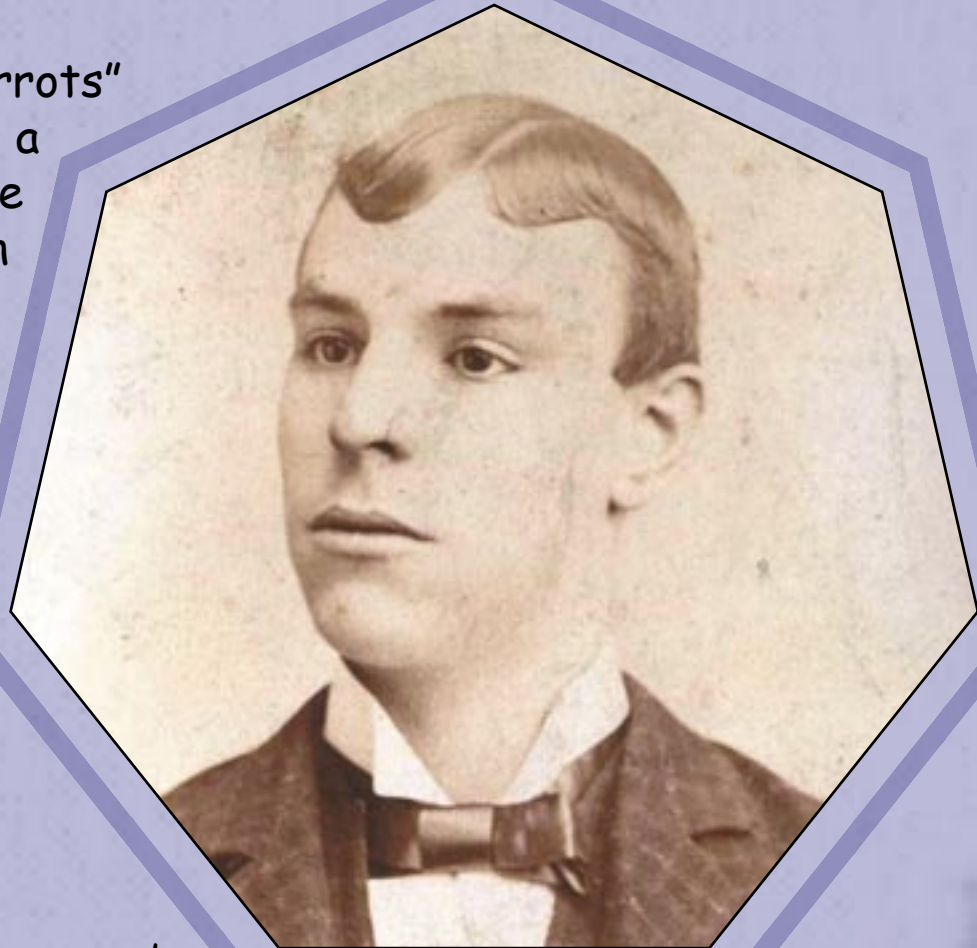
Dave Fuller's "The Ped'lars", Normandy



## Scarborough

Will Catlin started his first pierrot troupe - Catlin's "Favourite Pierrots" in 1896, although his first appearance on Scarborough sands was as a minstrel in 1894. However, before his arrival, there was another troupe called Sydney James' Strolling Players, who had formed in Scarborough even earlier in the 1890s: the company featured Tom Carrick who by 1896 had formed his own troupe of red-pom-pommed pierrots called Carrick's "Popular Pierrots", plying the North Bay. He & Catlin fiercely competed for the best of the pitches on the sands which were rented annually from the council.

Tom Carrick was a very generous, likeable man, with a broad Northern accent, who delivered crazy tongue twisters incredibly fast :  
"He knew all about etymology  
Hebrew, Shebrew and phrenology,  
Syntax, tin tacks, hob nailed boot jacks..."



Will Catlin as a young man, circa 1894



Tom Carrick (bottom centre) and his "Popular Pierrots" 1903

Catlin was a brilliant salesman: the troupes' image was always immaculate - every costume had to be washed and pressed each night. The pierrots had to walk in full make-up and costume from their digs to the sands each day as an example of smart appearance and good behaviour. Before the Great War, Catlin's troupes were all-male and forbidden from being seen in public with a girlfriend or wife. Every member of the troupe had to take their turn in collecting the money or "bottling" during a show and would also be required to sell merchandise such as songsheets, programmes and postcards afterwards. Every Monday, his fully-costumed troupe would ride around the town in a grand charabanc to greet the new arrivals and advertise their shows. They rehearsed most mornings of the week and then performed at 11, 3 & 7 and add an extra 2 shows a day on Bank Holidays! Catlin's hard-sell approach was very effective and he was soon able to form troupes in other resorts such as Bridlington, Withernsea, Whitley Bay, Cleethorpes & Great Yarmouth.

Carrick to take his pierrots inland, but just as he won the pierrot turf war, the Council started to raise the rents for the sands pitches! Undeterred, Catlin decided to invest in land on the foreshore and erected a wooden platform covered by a canvas tilt, which was the precursor of Catlin's "Arcadia" - a lavish pavilion but with no permanent roof, but which in time, could house 3,000 people in the audience.

There were many other troupes following Catlin's success in Scarborough - Grapho & Jackson had a troupe on the North Bay before removing themselves to Redcar. In the 1920's there were Feldman's Songsters in North Bay and George Horrocks' The Radios.

But the real challenge came from George Royle who brought his "Imps" from Blackpool & Whitby in 1910, where they performed on the South Sands. To try and match the success of Catlin's Arcadia, the Council built the Floral Hall:



George Royle's "Fol de Rols" 1912

the first season was given by Cardow's Cadets, but the following year, they invited Royle's Imps to play - this he did with his company renamed The Fol De Rols. They offered a more sophisticated entertainment with the added attraction of female performers in glamorous crinolines and bonnets and men's costumes - velvet tailcoats and wide-brimmed top hats in pastel shades. The Fols' slogan was "The Show that any child can take its parents to!" The company played all over the country right up until the 1966.

The Fol De Rols are one of the few troupes to bridge the Second World War and develop well-known artists such as Arthur Askey, Elsie & Doris Waters and their brother Jack Warner, Bill Pertwee, the Western Brothers, Jack Tripp, Cyril Fletcher, David Nixon & Leslie Crowther.

Will Catlin died 15<sup>th</sup> January 1953 - known as "King of the Pierrots".



Catlin's "Favourite Pierrots", South Sands 1903  
(Will Catlin standing downstage right)



## Filey



Andie Caine



Andie Caine's "Royal Pierrots" 1908



The Pierrotters at Andie Caine's grave, St. Oswald's graveyard, Filey

Andie Taylor was born in 1867, but changed his name later to Andie Caine - a name synonymous with Filey: theatrical impresario, cinema proprietor, innovator, town councillor and pierrot performer and manager for a continuous 43 years.

He started working as one of Captain Frank's minstrels in 1886, then joined Catlin's early troupes at Scarborough & Bridlington in the mid 1890s, but then started a pierrot double act with George Fisher on Filey sands. Andie sang and played banjo, whilst George played the strill (a portable harmonium), then they added a comedian (Teddy Myles) - but their busking take was so small that they often had to sleep rough on the sands. This troupe was possibly known as "Les Pierrots Bohemians". The local fishermen objected so strongly to the pierrots distracting their customers from boat trips around the bay, that they would dump rotting fish on their pitches and a harmonium that they had left outside a hotel was hurled over the cliff to drive them off!

Andie loved children and relished their nickname for him of "Uncle Andie" (a term handed-down from the minstrel tradition where the main character responsible for liaising with the children and audience was known as "Uncle"). He would always have a pocketful of sweets to hand-out a treats and recognized them as his future audiences. The morning shows were always children's shows with a weekly talent contest (with prizes, of course!) and singalong songs like "Just A Little Bit of String" and "Said the Bird on Nellie's Hat".

As the success of the pierrots and his other ventures grew, he bought the little Southdenes Theatre near the Royal Crescent Hotel where the Mountbatten family would occasionally stay and see his summer show; as a result, he called his troupe "The Royal Pierrots". They performed throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> World War and Filey children would sing his jingle - "Andie Caine, he's here again!"

He died on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1941 aged 72 and is buried in St Oswald's graveyard with a pierrot hat carved onto his gravestone.



## Bridlington

Charlie Beanland's "Waterloo Minstrels" appeared in Bridlington in 1893. Their name came from the Waterloo Café where they would store their costumes and change in the early years. Like many others, they adopted the costume of pierrot around the turn of the century.

Charlie Beanland (Uncle Sam) was the "Guvnor" of the troupe - he was a speed-cartoonist who could also draw pictures upside down and blindfolded! He had been with Catlin's troupe in Bridlington (as had Andie Caine), before forming his own company with his brother Joe (Johanna) Beanland.



"The Waterloo Pierrots" 1906 (note the full-sized harp!)

The Waterloo's pitch was on the beach in front of the sea defences, but if the tide was in, beach performances were impossible, so they toured the streets giving mobile performances. They worked entirely al fresco to begin with, but by 1909, they had become successful enough to purchase a tin-roofed wooden building on Flamborough Road.



Charlie Beanland (Uncle Sammy) 1907

They still had to pay for their pitches each season - £60 in 1901, rising to £160 by 1912 (over 250%!). However, Charlie had obviously learned from Will Catlin's robust management style by securing an agreement with the council that no other pierrot troupe would be allowed to perform on the North side. The troupe disbanded with the outbreak of war in 1914.



Harold Montague's "Vagabonds" 1905

Other concert parties in the town included the Beaconsfield Singers, Harold Montague's Vagabonds, Tom Carrick's White Musketeers, Flockton Foster's Idols, Walter George's Smart Set Entertainers and Charles Heslop's Brownies. Prior to the Second World War, larger spectacles and revues were run by Fred Rayne's "Northern Regionals" where Beryl Reid started her career and then the "Parade Show". After the War, in the 1940's, the companies grew in size and sophistication with elaborate sets and costume in stark contrast to the austerity of the war years.



Fred Rayne's "North Regional Follies" (Beryl Reid possibly far right)



GEORGIAN THEATRE ROYAL PRODUCTIONS  
PRESENTS

225<sup>th</sup>  
*Anniversary*



# Cinderella

Saturday 7th December 2013  
– Sunday 5th January 2014  
Box Office:  
**01748 825252**



The Georgian  
Theatre Royal  
RICHMOND  
1788



Written and Directed  
by TONY LIDINGTON



Following on from the enormous success of *Mother Goose*, *The Adventures of Sinbad* and *Babes in the Wood* Georgian Theatre Royal Productions are delighted to announce **Cinderella** as the 2103/14 pantomime!

Cinderella promises to be a magical production packed full of live music, traditional pantomime humour and **real horses!** Join Cinderella on her quest to help good conquer evil and marry her Prince Charming.

Cinderella will be the climax to the Georgians 225th Anniversary year and it will fuse together the traditional elements of pantomime with contemporary music and magic.

### December 2013

Saturday 7th	2pm	7pm
Sunday 8th	1pm	5pm
Monday 9th	10am	1.30pm
Tuesday 10th		1.30pm
Wednesday 11th	No show	
Thursday 12th	10am	1.30pm
Friday 13th	10am	1.30pm
Saturday 14th	2pm	7pm
Sunday 15th	1pm	5pm
Monday 16th	10am	1.30pm
Tuesday 17th	10am	1.30pm
Wednesday 18th	No show	
Thursday 19th	10am	7pm
Friday 20th	10am	7pm
Saturday 21st	2pm	7pm
Sunday 22nd	1pm	5pm

Monday 23rd	2pm	7pm
Tuesday 24th	1pm*	5pm*
Wednesday 25th	No show	
Thursday 26th	2pm*	7pm*
Friday 27th	2pm	7pm
Saturday 28th	2pm	7pm
Sunday 29th	1pm	5pm
Monday 30th	2pm	7pm
Tuesday 31st		2pm*

### January 2014

Wednesday 1st	No show	
Thursday 2nd	No show	
Friday 3rd	2pm	7pm
Saturday 4th	2pm	7pm
Sunday 5th	1pm	5pm

### Tickets

Adults: **£7-£20**

Concessions: **£6-£19** (\*excluding premium performances)

Children: **£9** (\*excluding premium performances)

Groups 1 in 10 free

Box Office: **01748 825252**

Georgian Theatre Royal, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 4DW

[www.georgiantheatreroyal.co.uk](http://www.georgiantheatreroyal.co.uk)

