

## **Scarborough Sea Wall Heritage Trail Project – Scarborough Memory.**

### **Cleaning for Celebrities by Brenda Evans of Scarborough**

Brenda Evans was born locally and lived in the Barrowcliff estate when young. Her father was from the Rhymney Valley in South Wales. Brenda's Grandfather's surname was Short and she believes that if not he, it was one of the Short's family who gave his name to Shorts Gardens near the Castle. On 10 October 1940 a single enemy plane flew low over the Castle Hill area and dropped a mine on rows of houses in the Potter Lane and Shorts Gardens area producing a huge crater 60 feet across and 30 feet deep. The target for the mine was believed to be the harbour entrance where it was thought the mine would end up awaiting a ship to strike it and be destroyed. The explosion completely destroyed five houses and 500 others were damaged. Fatalities and serious injuries were averted because so many of the local residents were at an aptly named 'Spitfire Dance' being held at the Olympia Ballroom. When the area was cleared of debris and eventually repaired the area was renamed Castle Gardens.

Brenda's husband was a Councillor. He worked at McCains from the early 1970s until the naughties deployed across many of the Company's food production lines. Brenda worked for many years at the Crown Hotel which was extensively used by entertainers and performers at the town's various theatres. She was involved in cleaning and management of the rooms on a particular floor and was regularly dealing with one celebrity or another. Kathy Kirby was one of these; she would have a massive room, three times the size of the normal double bedrooms. Brenda described her as very untidy with clothes being left strewn across the floor and chairs.

She also recalls The Small Faces being in residence for concerts in the town. One of the band approached her one day with his jacket which had a broken zip. He asked her to repair it for him and, although this was not part of her duties, she spent that evening repairing his jacket. She was less than impressed when she returned the jacket to him the following day only for him to take it back without a word of thanks and also without offering to pay her anything for her hard work.