

### NOTABLE EVENTS OF THE 1950s

1950. "The Blackpool rock racket"—"spivs" caught selling rock without sweet coupons.  
Severe gales damage second post-war Lights.
1951. Empty Squire's Gate Factory taken by Hawker Aircraft for the building of Hunter jets.  
King George VI and Queen Elizabeth tour the Fylde.  
Committee appointed to vet "dirty" postcards flooding the stalls.  
Grange Park Extension—100 acres of Poulton land earmarked for Corporation housing.  
Blackpool F.C. in the Cup Final. Beaten 2-0 by Newcastle.
1952. Squire's Gate jets necessitate an extension to the runway.  
Plans for a ring road (Queensway) approved.  
Delivery of the first "Coronation" trams.  
Feldman's Theatre sold (re-named Queen's).
1953. Sound barrier broken off the coast by Neville Duke flying a Hawker Hunter jet.  
Royal Agricultural Show at Blackpool.  
Blackpool murder case. Killing by rat poison. Mrs. Louisa Merrifield executed.
1954. H.R.H. Princess Margaret visits Hawker Aircraft Factory. Arnold Girls' School opened by H.R.H. The Princess Royal. High tides create a full scale emergency at Rossall. Sea wall damaged.
1955. A year dominated by the Royal Variety Show attended by H.M. Queen Elizabeth II and H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Royal box specially built at the Opera House for the glittering occasion.  
Glamorous veteran film star Marlene Dietrich appears at the Opera House.  
Illuminations switched on by Jacob Malik, Russian Ambassador.
1956. Gifts Fair held for the first time in Blackpool.  
Disastrous fire (13th/14th December) caused by a cigarette end left in a chair results in £500,000's worth of damage to the Tower Ballroom. Blaze described as "a scene out of hell" fought by 50 firemen and 100 Tower Company staff; brought under control in 6 hours.
1957. British Home Stores building completed and opened.  
Plans for a £7m. redevelopment scheme for Central Station and Golden Mile area.  
Squire's Gate Factory closed.
1958. Trailer-trams introduced (9th April). First double-deck trams run to Fleetwood (Easter).  
Gala opening (23rd May) of restored Tower Ballroom, Lounge and Bars, 18 months after the fire.