


100 Things About Southend Template

Title:	Oswald Mosley in Southend
Date:	1930s
Location:	136a, London Road, Southend-on-Sea
Image:	 <p>Oswald Mosley leading the salute at a B.U.F rally (not Southend)</p>
Headline:	British Union of Fascists were active in Southend during the 1930s
Fact 1	After several abortive attempts, by May 1934 the B. U. F. had launched a Branch at Southend with headquarters at 215, Southchurch Road. Assistant Propaganda Officer, W. W. E. Pooley, an ex-Tory propagandist, was the first leader of the local formation.
Fact 2	Two months later, William Joyce, a.k.a Lord HawHaw, addressed a "well attended meeting" on B. U. F. policy at the Crowstone Gymnasium, Westcliff on-Sea. Southend Times, 13 July 1934
Fact 3	From the mid to late 1930s, the District B. U. F. was fairly active in Southend. Open-air meetings were held regularly at Elmer Approach and on the Marine Parade, together with occasional marches, canvassing exercises and street newspaper sales
Fact 4	By May 1936, Southend B.U.F had rented a small shop at 136a, London Road to serve as permanent headquarters. A former Southend Blackshirt recalled the local base: "It was a shop on the main road. It wasn't all that big... two rooms probably. Nothing over the top. You went in the front, bought leaflets or books, and in the back there were members sitting and talking and so on, arranging campaigns for leaflet distribution or selling the paper.
Fact 5	During the summer period, another Blackshirt formation surfaced in the Southend County Borough at nearby Leigh-on-Sea. Headed by George E. Sutton, the Leigh-on-Sea Branch operated from 127, Leigh Rd, the private residence of a Mrs. Lake, who was "one of the most energetic" local members.
Fact 6	The largest B. U. F. event at Southend took place in April 1937, when Mosley delivered an address to an audience of approximately 2,000 at the Pleasure Beach skating rink. This engagement passed off peacefully. Southend Times 14 April 1937
Close:	On 23 May 1940, Mosley and some 740 other party members were interned under Defence Regulation 18B . The BUF then called on its followers to resist invasion, but it was declared unlawful on 10 July 1940 and ceased its activities.
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