

Margaret Ryder

Worked in the restaurant and met many famous people in the halcyon days

Born 1945 in Wimbledon, dad was a bus conductor and mother was a childminder. Went to the stadium with her friend but it was when she was 17 that she applied to work there on the tote in 1963 Races started at 7.30 and there were 8 races; taking the bets and paying out the winnings. Her wage was 15 shillings! She worked there for 7 years and then left to have children, returning in 1973 and remaining until it eventually closed. The job was ideal because she could work part-time and didn't have to hire a baby sitter.

The racing was exciting and the dogs were well looked after. On her return she was offered a job as a runner in the restaurant. She was involved in a syndicate and they had five greyhounds at one time. Adrenaline and excitement when your dog crossed the finishing line. They used to play Tina Turner 'Simply the Best' for the winner. It was sad when the old stand closed down because it was on the other side with the lights out.

During her time working in the restaurant she met lots of famous people: Omar Sharif kissed her hands, Elisabeth Taylor had the most amazing violet eyes, the Duke of Edinburgh was there, Henry Cooper. Has some friends that she gets together with regularly to chat about old times.