

Heartbeat of Hythe

Newsletter for members and volunteers of The Hythe Pier Heritage Association

March 2020 Issue No 3



Well I don't think that anyone could have predicted that we would be in the midst of the single biggest international health crisis that we have faced in modern peacetime. We are in a very fast changing and developing situation. It seems no one can be quite certain what the outcome will be, indeed right now it seems unclear what will happen tomorrow, let alone during the coming weeks and months.

What is clear is that like any responsible organisation we need to take the steps necessary to reduce the risk in what we do in order to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 Coronavirus.

I know that many of our members, volunteers and supporters are retired and may be more vulnerable. Your help and support is invaluable, without it we would not be able to achieve anything.

We have therefore decided to suspend all our current activities until this health emergency is over.

So we will not proceed with our planned spring event at the Pier.

We will not undertake any other activities that would require even small gatherings or group meetings.

Work on the restoration of the railway carriage working with the volunteers at the Hythe Men's Shed will be suspended with immediate effect.

We will suspend any planned attendance or participation at other community events for the next 12 weeks.

We will keep this situation under close review and keep you informed as to the future.

Our Community Working Together to bring our Heritage and History to life info@hythepierha.org.uk

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Our AGM for members which would normally be held in May will be postponed for at least three months.

What I do want to say is this, the pier, the train and the ferry have been here for a very long time, they will still be here when this crisis is over. Right now there are more important things to consider, your well being, the health and well being of your family, your friends and the whole community. This is what matters right now.

So please stay safe, take care and be assured that we will come together again to meet and enjoy events on the pier and support this project.

With my very best wishes to all of you.

Peter King

Hythe Pier heritage Association

Our community working together to bring our heritage and history to life.

As you will see from Peter's update above, we are all facing a time of unprecedented change and uncertainty.

All the articles written in this month's issue were written before the current crisis. Please bear this in mind as you read them. The Railway restoration for example will be delayed until further notice.

Keep abreast with updates via Facebook or our newly launched and developing website.

<http://www.hythepierha.org.uk/>

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Thankyou to Paul McDaid



Paul helping to rock the pier with Viv Carter and Allan Fairhead in July 2019.

In March 2019 Paul McDaid joined us for a twelve-month fixed term contract to work as our project development coordinator. This contract ends in just a couple of weeks and I want to take this opportunity to say a very big thank you to him for the very real contribution he has made during this period.

I am sure that you will agree with me that Paul is both engaging and personable and has made a real impact on our organisation. His energy and enthusiasm to help and support across every aspect of our activities has been self-evident right from the start. From his input to deliver the facelift at the pier entrance to his engagement in the community and his work to help and support the development of our project plans, Paul has made a real difference.

It is very unfortunate that due to the current health crisis we are unable to hold any social gathering to meet with Paul and celebrate his achievements. We will arrange to do this, once circumstances change. In the meantime, I know that you will join me in sending him our thanks for his good work and wish him well in the future.

Peter King

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Railway restoration update

Tina Brown (Board member)

We are extremely pleased to say that work will begin on one of the train carriages, thanks to all the skilled volunteers keen to begin restoration of our much loved train.

The aim is to dismantle carriage four housed in the train workshop and rebuild section by section in The Shed, started by Allan Fairhead; carpenters, boatbuilders and other skilled volunteers will lend their hand and hearts to restore over the next couple of months. The sections will then be reassembled in the Railway workshop at the Pier. This is a collaborative project with Blue Funnel Ferries who will be undertaking all engineering aspects.

Once this carriage is ready again for service, we will be able to commence restoration works on another carriage, our aim being that all four carriages and tractors are fully restored ready for the next 100 years!

Please note Restoration works are suspended until further notice



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Notes from the Shed

By Allan Fairhead

After two days (Monday/Tuesday 6th/7th January) for visiting, I opened the Hythe Shed (at the pier) for membership on Wednesday 8th January. By closing time at 4 o/c we had 30 members.

Over the next weeks we have gone up to 63 paid up members , and many more on our Facebook group site.

Originally open on a Wednesday from 10 o/c to 4 o/c we now open on Tuesdays as well.

Our members have been cleaning the building and yard of a hundred years of use , and installing insulation and wall boards and painting them, installing a kitchen area and worktops, cleaning down the exterior paint from walls and doors ready for re-painting.

Our community have been very generous in donating tools, money, tea, coffee biscuits, mugs, cakes, furniture, new windows etc, etc.

Members have been cleaning and checking tools ready for use on our projects.

Our main aim is to assist the HPHA with the restoration of the pier and train.

I have salvaged heritage items which are being restored for display and use on the pier, and hopefully will soon start with the repair and restoration of the first railway carriage.

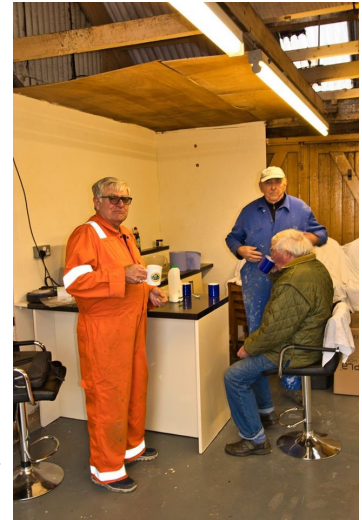
The Hythe Shed (at the pier) is also an area for members to make or mend their own projects, or just to socialise over tea/coffee and biscuits.

Our members have cleared an external area to construct a large planted area-where members can sit out and enjoy the views over the water while chatting and passing on tales.

Our members pay £10.00 per year and £2.00 per visit to cover our overheads. They help themselves to drinks and biscuits .



You are welcome to come down to visit and see the works we do.



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Our iconic, quirky little green train By Alan Titheridge

Mr T.B. Percy, proprietor of the Hythe Ferry, bought 3 electric tractors from the War Office surplus government property catalogue in 1920 and having subsequently acquired passenger carriages from the Drewry Car Company introduced, under the direction of engineer Mr Gerald Yorke, the Hythe Pier Tramway in July 1922. Almost a century later it still transports ferry passengers up and down the 2100 feet Hythe Pier, earning a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the World's oldest operating pier railway.



It might not have come to be however. In October 1931, Mr Yorke advised Mr Percy to replace the tractors with motor driving carriages, repeating such in March 1933 but with revenue from the ferry traffic struggling to break even, replacement was deferred. In 2003 Hampshire County Council in conjunction with White Horse Ferries, then proprietors of the ferry, funded a study to replace the pier railway with a broader gauge modern

people mover; the Donald Redford dredger collision with the pier seems to have been a major factor in putting an end to this.

So here we are today, having survived vandalism, derailments, crashing into the buffers on more than one occasion and having carried hundreds of thousands of commuters, football fans, brides to weddings and receptions, minor celebrities and even royalty, our iconic, quirky little green train has earned a place in our hearts. It's looking a little weather-

beaten, in need of some TLC. What better incentive can there be than to have the "Heartbeat of Hythe" restored in time for a centenary bash in July 2022.



Photo courtesy of Alan Titheridge

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Children's Pier Drawings on display at HPHA Information Event by Alan Titheridge (Board Member)

HPHA held an Information Event in the waiting Room on Hythe Pier on 22nd February. The event was staged to provide information regarding the organisation's progress, particularly that on the day about the railway restoration.

Some weeks earlier, pupils from Hythe Primary School had had a visit from Jill Gower of HPHA, who told them something of the history of Hythe Pier and its iconic Pier Railway, in the Guinness Book of Records for being the World's oldest operating pier tramway. This was followed up with a visit to and a ride along the pier aboard the train. Jill and myself were on hand to answer questions. The boys and girls were very enthusiastic and more than just a little imaginative; enquiring why there wasn't a bridge or a tunnel across to Southampton. The pupils were told of the visit of King George VI in 1944 and how they could sit on the actual seat the King used in one of the carriages.

They showed concern about the condition of the carriages when told of the urgent need for renovation and were invited to draw pictures and write about their experience during their visit. Many of the drawings were on display in the waiting room at the Information Event with some of the pupils bringing their proud parents along to view their work.



At the event there was a display of future plans for the pier, a large sign that hung over the entrance to the old ticket office and at the pier entrance a vintage luggage cart, recently worked upon by the Hythe Shed (at the Pier). HPHA chairman Peter King along with other HPHA volunteers were on hand to answer questions. Tea, cake and biscuits were on offer for a donation, raising £68 towards the funds for the proposed renovation. Volunteer Maureen Mintram ran a merchandising stall. New volunteers were recruited on the day.

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Fundraising story behind Pier Pictures on Canvas

In 2003, my wife and I witnessed the Pier crash from our home one dark evening on 1st November at 18:01. With sparks flying we immediately alerted the Ambulance, Fire Brigade, Police and Coast Guard. Thankfully nobody was on the Pier at the time. In January 2004 the Pier was repaired and the pier saw a 'new dawn'. As the sun rose behind it I made a 1.5 metre pastel painting on a plank in celebration! It was to be hung from the wall over our bed. Peter King suggested a copy could be made on canvas to sell for HPHA.

Bob Joughin, a near neighbour, a very professional photographer, gave of his time and captured the 1.5 metre original pastel picture in sharpest detail. Hand rails and all. He produced a Master File from which Sparkling Canvasses could be printed and even bought the very first one for HPHA himself. In 2018 I attempted trials with two different suppliers to enable the best return for HPHA. Copy Concept in Yorkshire gave a quick service, for well-priced mounted pictures of both One metre and Half metre sizes and included tracked postage to my customers direct. Sadly eventually sickness in the firm made deliveries too erratic.

New prices at Hythe Photographic negotiated by Phil Bridges, would give of their time at cost (making this a true 'gift' to the HPHA) "Thank you" to Bob and Graeme Marsden. It is now possible to include over 40% for HPHA in all selling prices

The new owners of Hythe Post Office, Kay Clark and son Steven, wanted to be involved with the local community. They bought my demos and offered to sell direct from them.

Phil ensures sufficient stock of canvasses are produced, delivering them a few steps away to Hythe Post Office ready for selling and is able to keep careful tabs on costs and sales.

Apart from both versions displayed in the Post Office, large versions can be seen displayed in various Hythe businesses and areas open to the public, for example at the Waterfront and Solent Surgery, a Podiatrist and Physiotherapist, The latest is Fred Olsen Travel Agents in the Marsh, plus ShawFix in Dibden Purlieu. We are grateful for this support. An unmounted large canvas crossed the Atlantic from Phil Bridges to an ecstatic expat buyer and latterly even one of our Heritage volunteers bought my one metre demo model while I was on the pier. A "Thank You" to her and all buyers' support.

David Whiteside and Phil Bridges

All sales are in aid of your local Charitable Benefit Society No 7708 HPHA.

Flyer Copies and top-ups also available from Phil Bridges on 079 9056 3147

[-shop@hythepierha.org.uk](mailto:shop@hythepierha.org.uk)

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Fundraising update by Viv Carter

Collecting Pots

We have 20 collecting pots out and about in the community . These bring in a steady stream of much needed revenue . So far this year the following pots have been returned and replaced: We do however, have 50 more collecting pots going spare, it'd be lovely to place those out and about in the community. If anyone has somewhere they could host one, or place it and keep an eye on it, please contact support@hythepierha.org.uk

13/01/2020	Holbury Hardware	21.03
23/01/2020	Homeborough House	14.64
26/02/2020	Hythe Ferry Office (including a donation from a Pupil at Hythe Primary School	147.70

Easyfunding

A huge THANKS to all the amazing supporters of Hythe Pier Heritage Association who shop through [#easy-fundraising](#)! We've just received £57.27 that was raised in the last few months of last year! Please keep using it whenever you shop online - over 3,600 retailers send us FREE donations when you shop at no extra cost so it's FREE money for us! If you haven't signed up yet, visit: <http://www.hythepierha.org.uk/easyfundraising.asp> Please share this post on your timeline so more people know about this EASY way to raised funds for Hythe Pier without costing you anything! Thank you.

Hythe Ukulele Group support Hythe Pier

A cheque for £1000 was presented by Kaj Warming on behalf of the Hythe Ukulele Group to the Hythe Pier Heritage Association at its meeting on February 6th.

The Hythe Ukulele Group give performances at fetes and fairs, charitable events, birthday parties and care homes for a donation to their current local charities. The group meets at the Hythe & Dibden Community Centre in Brintons Lane, Hythe on the first and third Thursday of each month and welcomes anyone, whether a novice or experienced musician.

A big thankyou to you all!



Record Fair

Thank you to Mark Blondel for inviting HPHA to run the café at the record fair on 22nd Feb....raising £20. Dates have been set for future record fairs/HPHA cafes in St John's hall: **25th April 26th Sept and 14th November.**

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Fundraising update cont

Waterside Quilters

A cheque for an amazing £425.00 was recently donated by the Waterside Quilters. This local group meet twice a month at St. Andrew's Centre and each year choose to support a local charity. We are really grateful that this year Hythe Pier Heritage Association was the lucky one to be chosen.

The money is raised through raffles, sale of fabric or craft tables at local fairs.

A Volunteer's View

by Rosella Braybrook

I was first introduced to the HPHA when I heard volunteers were needed for help in the pop up cafe at the end of the Pier. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting & serving customers & enjoyed the camaraderie. I then heard there was more help needed at various events held to raise more funds so I have helped where I can since then. The highlight each year is "Rock the Pier" where various bands play throughout the day, there's tombola, a raffle, merchandise for sale, children's activities & of course the Pop up cafe is in full swing at the end of the Pier selling drinks & a wonderful selection of cakes.

BUT and its a BIG "BUT" there is a great deal of work in the background done by volunteers for all our events. There is a need for advertisers, publishers and organisers for entertainment, merchandise, children's activities, tombola, raffles & the list goes on. So if you feel you could offer your time & services to help this worthwhile cause that brings people into our lovely town via the ferry & brings our town folk together celebrating the oldest standing pier & train which is all part of our town's heritage, please let us know.

If by reading this you have any thoughts you would like to share, memories, photos, anything our members would be interested in, then please get in touch so that it can be shared in one of our newsletters.

Dates for your Diaries

- AGM postponed
- Spring event postponed
- **Hythe Sailing Club Open Day** - Sunday 5th July 10am - 3pm.
- **Rock the Pier** **Saturday 8th August 10 a.m—6 p.m.**
- **Heritage Day** **Saturday 10th October**

2020

January	February	March
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April	May	June
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July	August	September
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October	November	December
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