

Heartbeat of Hythe

Newsletter for members and volunteers of The Hythe Pier Heritage Association



December 2020 Issue No 8



Dear Members and Volunteers,

Last month we updated you briefly on both our carriage restoration as well as plans for the structures on the Pier.

In this month's issue, we have updates on both the latest Pier restoration work as well as the carriage repairs.

2020 has certainly been a very challenging year for us all and I am sure no one will regret it's passing. Let us hope that 2021 brings with it the prospect of better fortune, happier times and above all some much needed human contact which has been so sadly missing this year. We very much look forward to meeting you all down at the Pier for some live events in 2021.

With these thoughts in mind, may I wish you all on behalf of all the members of the Board , a very peaceful and healthy Christmas and New Year.

Jill Gower

Secretary and Editor



Wire JD at Rock the Pier 2019

Photo: Elizabeth Smith

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

Hythe Pier Heritage Association is a Charitable Community Benefits Society (Reg No 7708)

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HPHA and the Pier Head Buildings—update by Alan Titheridge

The Hythe Pier Heritage Association is at present actively engaged with architects and surveyors looking at the preservation options and routes to the restoration of Hythe Pier and its pier head buildings. Whilst that incorporating the waiting room on the north side is structurally in reasonable shape, that on the south side is giving cause for concern.

Blue Funnel Ferries is in the process of clearing the building which for the past quarter of a century has been used as a storeroom. An asbestos survey commissioned by HPHA has recently been undertaken, revealing the presence of a small amount of this hazardous material, which will be removed shortly. It is proposed to preserve the building by means of a temporary protection system in advance of the impending winter whilst the charity secures funding for a permanent repair and restoration.



The building on the south side was built in 1894 and extended in 1896 when that on the north side was erected. In 1894 the tenant of the south side building, the Hythe Sailing Club was saying that their clubhouse was “very nicely furnished with dressing rooms for members”.

At the outbreak of WWI in 1914, the Hythe Sailing Club handed their clubhouse over to the authorities for use in the war effort. The club declined to take up its option of re-occupation at the end of the war, so the premises were let to the YMCA. During 1921, the Royal Motor Yacht Club took up residence and immediately set about an extensive modernisation. Work was completed in March 1922 when it was announced that “comfortable and roomy quarters are now available, including a large dining room, galley, bar and four berth sleeping cabins, there is besides a bathroom”.

During the years following WWII the south side building was used in a variety of ways. Until 1976 it was a restaurant. Since then, it has been a meeting room, an exhibition room and for two years White Horse Ferries used it as an office. During the 1980s it was planned to install an aquarium, but the project failed to come to fruition.

The Covid 19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns have severely limited HPHA’s fundraising opportunities but its determination to restore Hythe Pier and its Railway has not wavered. Donations can be made via its website www.hytheukpierha.org.

Photo: Lee Rayment

Carriage Restoration - update by Tina Brown



Preparing and filling exterior woodwork



Tina Brown painting interior roof.

We are so pleased of how refurbishments on carriage 4 are progressing and look forward to its return to the tracks on the pier in the New Year. Painting and varnishing is underway, new lighting is being connected and new glazing will be delivered for installing within the next two weeks.

Works to the carriage have been overseen by Alan Keef Limited who are a family owned and run business in rural Herefordshire. They are a widely recognised and acknowledged authority on all aspects of narrow gauge railways both in the UK and worldwide.

Patrick Keef visited us a few weeks ago and commented ,

“Congratulations on what you have achieved on the first carriage. Your team has made a significant step forward, and this carriage will be a clear ‘statement of intent’ for your organisation. At a wholly practical level, I am very comfortable with the quality of workmanship, and the approach you are taking. Subject to some images when the doors have been completed and fitted, I am happy to sign off this vehicle to return to service. “

Thankyou to all the volunteers who have worked on this restoration work, particularly from The Men’s Shed (at the pier) as well as the engineering input from BFF.

Photos: Alan Titheridge

A Big Thankyou!

At the end of last month Viv Carter finally decided she could sadly no longer devote the time needed to organise and lead events for HPHA. As most of you will know, Viv already works for Honey Pot , but recently her 'part-time' position has become much more time consuming. She has also taken on further responsibilities at home so difficult decisions had to be made. Luckily for us, Viv will not be deserting us completely...she would like to stay involved and help out in anyway she can, I am sure we can find a stall for her next year!

Viv has been involved with HPHA since its inception , her energy and enthusiasm is amazing, organising and co-ordinating volunteers as well as run the events themselves, is no mean feat . On behalf of all members and volunteers we would like to say a big thankyou!



Viv pictured last year accepting the donation from David Morris raised through the sale of calendars.

Gift Aid that donation!

Donating through Gift Aid means charities can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you give. It will not cost you any extra. For the donation to qualify the donor must be a UK resident and pays more UK tax (income/capital gains) than the donation made. HPHA is recognised as a charity by HMRC for tax purposes, and so gift aid is applicable to donations made to us.

During this 2nd lockdown we have been working on the collection of Gift Aid (GA) from donations already made to us by UK taxpayers and putting in place ways in which gift aid may be collected on donations in future. Donations made in the past may qualify for Gift Aid. We plan to review our previous donation records to see if we can recover GA on them. If you have made a donation to HPHA, and wish to add Gift Aid to it, please contact us by sending an email to information@hythepierha.org.uk

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I – Inheriting

Throughout the history of the Hythe Pier and Ferry there are instances of jobs being passed from father to son. The most celebrated family association is that of the Banks. Dickie Banks skippered the earliest steam-boats in the 1850s before handing over the helm to his son Jack, who in turn passed the baton to his son Henry Thomas. Harry Banks, who passed way in 2003 took over from his father, Henry Thomas. The family association doesn't stop there either. Wilf Banks was a ferry skipper from 1938 until the early 1960s and John Banks was piermaster during the 1950s

More recently John Malkison handed over the helm of Great Expectations to his son Patrick in September 1995. Patrick still skippers Hythe Scene today.



Photo: John and Patrick Malkison

J – “Jumping” from the Pier

I had to be a little creative, J was difficult!

In the mid-1930s there was a springboard for diving from the pier. There was even accommodation for changing. For ladies there was a partition in the tearoom, close by the W.C., and gentlemen had a small partitioned of section of the staff room at the pierhead.

K – King George VI

Shortly before D Day in 1944, the Hythe Ferry was approached by the authorities to secretly land HRH King George VI on Hythe Pier during a visit to inspect the many craft assembled in preparation for the invasion of Europe on June 6. Mr William Arthur Lane, acting manager for the Hythe Ferry, was heavily involved with local organisation under the utmost secrecy.

His Majesty arrived at Hythe Pier by launch, just as the last of the “working party” of naval ratings detailed to tidy the pier head and clean the train was hidden away. At the pierhead, the King and his entourage were escorted onto the train and throughout the journey along the pier by a naval welcoming party, during which he was saluted by a second party of ratings standing guard at each lamppost. On arrival at the landward end, His Majesty took time to talk with the train driver, Mr Leonard Pearce, before he and his party proceeded to Broadlands.

A commemorative plaque later placed in the carriage in which the King rode was subsequently removed by an anonymous and unscrupulous souvenir hunter. A period penny coin has in very recent times been placed on the backrest of the seat upon which the King sat.



Coin—Alan Titheridge

L – Lockdown

Who could have envisaged the end of the second decade of the 21st Century ending with not one but two instances of Lockdown, two periods of Government ordered restrictions of our everyday lives?

Patronage of the Hythe Ferry dipped to levels never seen before, prompting a total suspension that in the first instance was to last for several weeks and the very real threat of permanent closure. A successful “Crowdfunding” appeal and grants from local council have subsequently ensured safety, for the time being at least.

The goals of the Hythe Pier Heritage Association suffered set-back too, with fundraising events cancelled throughout 2020. Donations have continued to come in, but the restoration of the pier needs more. A grant from the Beaulieu Beaufort Federation has at least allowed the repair and restoration of the first of the train carriages to commence, within socially distancing guidelines.

Last minute stocking fillers.....

A busy year despite the pandemic putting paid to the usually popular merchandise stall at the various HPHA events, lets hope it won't be too long before we can start again.

Fortunately our eBay store (<https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/hpha-shop>) came to the rescue and has enabled us to carry on selling HPHA merchandise. Dawkins & Lodge have also stepped in and are holding stock for anybody who would to collect items in person. This saves you the postage and us the 10% eBay fees, our sincere thanks to branch manager Linda for organising this.



We are almost out of the green railway caps, completely sold out of the Loco pin badges and down to the last 10 sweatshirts.

The good news however, is that we still have just over **100 of the limited edition Railway badges**. We are also running a **BOGOF** offer on wristbands (*Buy One Get One Free*) for a limited time. See <https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/hpha-shop>

In the meantime we're running a Facebook "**12 days of Christmas**" campaign @HythePierHA and answering the HPHA phone line - 023 8098 6480 , so most of the time you'll actually get to speak to real person rather the voicemail system!

HPHA Merchandising Team – December 2020

Board Meeting dates and procedures

Normally the Board is attended by all Board members and other non-Board members, volunteers or external experts as required to support agenda items.

This a reminder that Board meetings may also be attended on an irregular basis by members of HPHA as observers. Such attendance must be requested at least 7 days in advance of the meeting by contacting any Board member.

Observing members will be accommodated on a "best efforts" basis as limitations may be imposed upon us by technology considerations or Coronavirus regulations.

Currently all HPHA Board meetings are held using Microsoft Teams online technology. Your computing equipment will need to be compatible with this technology in order to become an observer of the Board meeting.

Thursday, 28 January 2021
Thursday, 25 February 2021
Thursday, 25 March 2021
Thursday, 29 April 2021
Thursday, 27 May 2021
Thursday, 24 June 2021
Thursday, 29 July 2021