

# Heartbeat of Hythe



The newsletter of Hythe Pier Heritage Association

October 2023 Issue 27

Our Community Working Together to bring our Heritage and History to life

## Welcome

It has been a busy couple of months down at the Pier, a successful Heritage Day, the end of some uncertainty with the ferry service and significant restoration work.

The ferry service between Hythe and Southampton, which was announced as closing at the end of last year, has now been bought by Red Funnel. The pier is not included in the purchase so will continue to be owned by Blue Funnel and HPHA owns the train and carriages. HPHA is pleased that the uncertainty around the future of the historic ferry has been resolved and we wish Red Funnel all best wishes in their future operations.

Jill Gower

Secretary and Editor



Visitors walking the Pier on Heritage Day 2023

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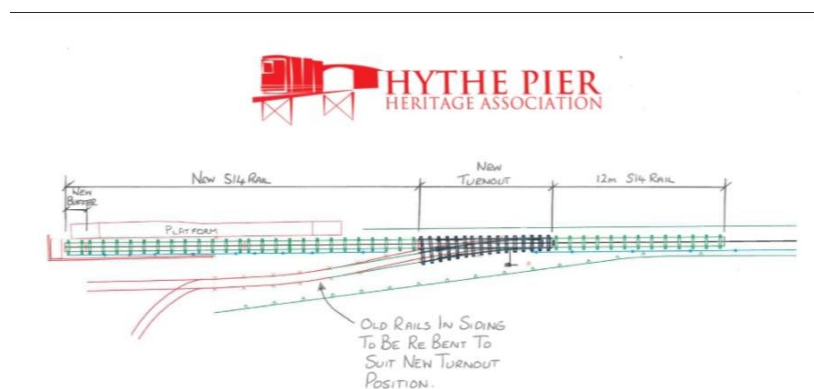
## Old Beams, New Beams and a very Big Crane!



Planning permission for the track restoration project phase 1 was finally given at the end of September. Access to the pier was changed to allow us to lift the planks and preserve the Victorian beams. These were then preserved by cleaning and painting. The old track was then removed. A large crane delivered the new steel beams and new wooden beams. These new wooden beams sit on top of the steel beams to support the new planks that form the pier deck.

Now that the pier structure under the train track has been reinforced and made safe, the next step will be removal of old planking and the installation of new.

Here is a quick sketch of the extent of the work we aim to eventually do in the current track repair project. Soon the pier decking will be complete, then the next stage will be to install and set the level of the new track against the pier levels. After that the new platform will be constructed. Every pier railway has its own special “features”, which mean that during the installation we know we will be delayed as we adjust matters to suit. It is difficult, therefore, to say exactly when the project will be completed. At the moment, we imagine by Christmas 2023.



## **Carriage 2 Restoration Update** Tina Brown

Restoration work continues on both Carriage 2 (A driving carriage) and Tractor number 2. Brundles Limited have delivered the steel that will be cut to size and used to assemble the carriage chassis frame. The wheels need to be taken from underneath the old chassis frame – work in progress.

The volunteers at Hythe Shed (at the Pier) are eager to assemble Carriage 2 after completing the side panels, roof, seats etc and see their hard work take form.

Being a driving carriage, there are other elements to the train carriage, including new cabling for the electrical systems. Following dismantling and inspection of carriage the engineering team are confident that the breaking system and gearing is in good order.



Tractor 2, partially rebuilt, on display at Heritage Day

## **Heritage Day 2023**



There was a great turn out for Heritage Day 2023 to celebrate the history and heritage of Hythe Pier and Railway. There was lots to see and do, providing interest and entertainment for young and old alike. On the pier, there were displays of heritage artefacts and information boards plus a video presentation. For youngsters there was a fun Heritage Trail to complete.

Sarah Marsden's History Walks and Talks, also proved popular, with her taking groups of people around the pier and village. The pier workshop was open for inspection and HPHA volunteers were on hand to answer any questions.

The Shed (at the Pier) welcomed visitors and there was a model railway display and large scale model trains courtesy of Exbury Railway. Vintage vehicles were also exhibited at the event. The Dutton amphibious car offered rides to give visitors the opportunity to take to the water. An avenue of gazebos housed a variety of stalls including HPHA Merchandise, Book and Toy stalls, Teddy Tombola, Simon Chadwick Cartooning and a 'pop-up' café provided much needed refreshments.

Local magician Roger Lapin kept folk entertained while New Forest Brass and the Front Line Ukulele group supplied musical accompaniment to proceedings. With great thanks to our event sponsors and all who attended, making the day a huge success.

Just over £3000 was raised to support the work of HPHA to preserve and restore Hythe's historic pier and railway.

## **Forthcoming Events**

1. Members “Meet-up” - Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October 10.30 am – Noon – at The Shed at the pier
2. Mistletoe Fayre – Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December (times TBC) tombola and merchandise

## **Board Meeting dates**

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 we have space limitations within our usual meeting room.

The dates for this year and next are as follows:

- Thursday, 26 October 2023
- Thursday, 30 November 2023
- Thursday, 21 December 2023
- Thursday, 25 January 2024
- Thursday, 29 February 2024
- Thursday, 28 March 2024
- Thursday, 25 April 2024
- Thursday, 30 May 2024 (also AGM)
- Thursday, 27 June 2024
- Thursday, 25 July 2024
- Thursday, 26 September 2024
- Thursday, 31 October 2024
- Thursday, 28 November 2024
- Thursday, 19 December 2024