

**Restoration of Luggage Truck
commencing February 2025**

The luggage truck employed on the Hythe Pier Railway is owned (as is the rest of the locomotives and rolling stock) by the Hythe Pier Heritage Association (HPHA), having been gifted in 2023 by previous owner Blue Funnel Ferries, and is leased for operation on the world's oldest continuously electric train operating on a pier, to the Hythe and Southampton Ferry Company.

It was withdrawn from service during early February for restoration, a part of HPHA's continuing programme of restoration projects for the Hythe Pier Railway.

It was constructed in 1909, one of two, for the transportation of "heavy goods and passenger's luggage" along the 640 metres length of Hythe Pier. Propulsion was by manpower along tracks sunk into the decking on the north side of the structure in May



1909. The work was carried out by Marchwood builder E J Kingham, who was also a local undertaker. The "tramway" first operated in July 1909. The Hampshire Independent dated July 31, 1909 records "the new tramway on the pier is now in use and luggage and goods are conveyed up and down on a couple of up-to-date trolleys".

The same publication reported in its February 12, 1910 edition, "The tramway laid down on the pier for the conveyance of heavy goods and

passenger's luggage has proved of great advantage and we notice that some additional sidings are now being put down by Mr. Kingham's workmen, which will greatly facilitate the traffic arrangements".

Although not as originally intended, ferry passengers and promenaders were occasionally afforded a "lift".

In 1920, Mr Thomas Percy, then owner of the pier and ferry boats, saw an opportunity to install an electric railway along the pier. The story of the pier railway is well documented elsewhere. So far as the luggage trucks are concerned, they were modified for the wider gauge raised track installed on the south side in 1921. The electric railway, drawing power from a third rail, commenced operating in July 1922.

The surviving truck differs very little from its original design. The other truck was shunted from the pier into the water. In a letter to railway engineer Gerald Yorke dated August 24, 1922, Mr Percy explained how, just weeks after the railway was inaugurated, that "the train pushed the luggage truck over the end of the pier". No record can be found of any recovery.

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Luggage Truck May 2022 (Photos Alan Titheridge)



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Top two photographs this page (4) and all page 3 Alan Titheridge February 12, 2025



Disassembly commenced during mid February, with the luggage truck having been shunted and parked on the siding outside of the workshop.

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Photos: Alan Titheridge (February 19, 2025)



Further disassembly of luggage truck.
Photos: Alan Titheridge February 25, 2025



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Disassembly continues. Photos: Tina Brown



Photo J Drodge

Wheels and Axels checked and appear in good condition.



Photo J Drodge

Coupling bars showing signs of excessive wear and will require replacement.



Photo J Drodge

Initial strip down complete, worst of the rust removed.



Photo J Drodge

This picture shows an area of the original frame where corrosion has eaten through the frame and will require replacement. This section will require to be cut out and a new fabricated part made. There appears to be sufficient steel off cuts in the workshop to fabricate the replacement part.