Issue 3—September 2020

Pier Review

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE

SOUTHEND PIER MUSEUM FOUNDATION TRUST LTD

Registered Charity No 802105 Registered Company No 02400655

Stop press: New Pier trains will be traditional green and cream

THE PIER MUSEUM—WHAT A YEAR

Well, what a year – and its only two thirds over! You will not at all be surprised that it has not been business as usual this year. The Pier itself was shut to the general public from the end of March until July and the trains only started operating a few weeks ago.

The Trustees undertook a full analysis of the situation to assess if we could safely re-open the museum in a Covid secure way this year. We factored in the space restrictions within the museum, disabled access options, protective equipment and screens required and the impact on the increased volunteer pool necessary to safely manage the museum and its visitors.

After careful consideration, we came to the conclusion that it will not be practical for the museum to re-open to the general public this summer. However, we are making use of the opportunity to plan for more significant enhancements within the museum in 2021. And to update you the new Pier trains will be in heritage green and cream and are currently under construction.

May I offer my sincere thanks for your continued support as members and for the many kind donations. We have obviously lost the bulk of our income this year and are drawing upon reserves to pay the unavoidable bills!

A BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATERS

Southend Pier – continuing to support the town

During the war, the town utilised its pier for the benefit of the population. The recent pandemic lock-down has offered yet another opportunity and once more the our Pier has shown its value.

Southend Council launched a plan to deliver food parcels to the most vulnerable in the Borough. Supermarkets, businesses and charities donated food and toiletries so that vulnerable households could get support during the uncertain times.

The hub for the distribution of these food parcels was the Visitor Information Centre on the Pier. The area below would normally be the entrance route to our museum but as you can see, was fulfilling another key role to support local people.

VE DAY 76 ON THE PIER

HMS Leigh - project update

In Issue 2, we introduced the HMS Leigh – Guardian of the Thames, community led, heritage and arts project that aims to connect people of all ages with the history of Southend Pier, also known as HMS Leigh, during World War 2. This project was created as part of the planned VE 75 celebrations in 2020, but due to the pandemic, the event was replaced by an online festival, HMS Leigh Make Do and Mend.

Over 140,000 people engaged in the event between 6 and 10 May and this overwhelming response generated a wonderful outpouring of largely unknown Southend WW2 archives. The HMS Leigh Steering Group believe that this offers a huge opportunity to teach local history at a completely different level and inspire younger generations to follow in the footsteps of those resourceful men and women who together turned a pleasure pier into a naval battle station during WW2.

Over the next year, the Group will be working to bring people together to celebrate the best of our WW2 history , with exhibitions, inclusive art activities, performances, and engaging with local charities as part of the HMS Leigh Guardian of the Thames VE76 Event on the Pier 6-9 May 2021. For further details, visit www.hmsleigh.org.uk

The Southend Pier Museum Trust intends to fully engage with this project and to offer the museum as a resource. We expect our archives to benefit from the legacy of the event and it has already started with the donation of this naval trunk belonging to Lieutenant Commander I M Burt, the Pier Head Control Officer during WW2. We are currently researching more about this significant individual but it will form a pride of place in our WW2 exhibit.

AGM INVITATION

We are overdue in holding our Annual General Meeting this year for obvious reasons. Given the unusual circumstances, we could have been forgiven for postponing it to next year but we have decided to proceed via an electronic format. Many of us may have been introduced to using online conferencing tools such as Zoom, Teams, Skype, etc. I realise this approach will not work for all but it may have the unusual benefit of allowing some members from further afield to take part, which would not normally be practical.

The AGM will be held on 22 October 2020 via the Zoom conferencing system. The log in details are as follows:-
Access can be achieved using your browser or the app on your computer, tablet, smart phone and even by dialling in via your landline. If you need assistance in setting this up, please get in touch by emailing membership@southendpiermuseum.co.uk

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Tim Watts is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.
Topic: Southend Pier Museum Foundation Trust Annual General Meeting
Time: 22 October 2020 at 2pm
If joining using computer, tablet or smartphone using video:-
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86238522871?pwd=SitQelpWM0YzY21PMUVkd2Roa2J2Zz09
Meeting ID: 862 3852 2871
Passcode: 727934
If joining by landline for audio only dial any of the following (you may need to try a few)
0203 051 2874 United Kingdom
0203 481 5237 United Kingdom
0203 481 5240 United Kingdom
0131 460 1196 United Kingdom
Meeting ID: 862 3852 2871#
Participant ID: #
Passcode: 727934#