

# HASTINGS PIER CHARITY



## Hastings Pier Timeline



Hasting Pier during the Victorian Era, (HPC068.028)



Supported by  
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1869	18-Dec	First iron pile screwed into seabed.
1872	05-Aug	Pier Opened by Earl Granville.
1875	02-Aug	A small camera obscura is installed (until 1904/5).
1877	01-Jan	A tollhouse wrecked by huge storm.
1878	May	The New White Rock Baths are opened.
1883	Oct	A bandstand is erected on the seafront, beside the White Rock Baths.
1884		Some of the new technology electric lighting was tried, with three tall poles being erected along the main deck. The pier had had gas lighting since it was built, and continued using it.
1884		All the original landing stages at end of the Pier are replaced by new small ones.
1884	02-Sept	A three-week trial by a fairly large pleasure steamer is a success, leading to the setting up of the Hastings and St Leonards Passenger Steamship Company Ltd in early 1885 to run Hastings Pier-based steamer services. This is to be the first of a series of four locally-owned companies with similar-sounding names that ran in succession from 1885 to 1907.
1886	Mar	A larger landing stage on the east side of the Pier is completed.
1890		The landing stage is extended around the seaward end of the Pier.
1894		A tea café is opened at sea-end of the Pier.
1896	Oct	The Pier is damaged from loose timber that came from St Leonards Pier during a large storm.
1899	15-May	The Pier pavilion is enlarged with a new roof, a balcony at the south-end, and a clock on the roof.

1903		Electric light is expanded and four lit arches are installed over the toll booths and the Three poles are taken down.
1904	Summer	A tea café for women is opened at the sea-end called the Creamery.
1909	01-Apr	The 'American Syndicate', also known as the Rinkeries, takes out a lease on St Leonards Pier and carries out big improvements. It reopened on 23 May 1909 as the 'American Palace Pier' (but usually just called the 'Palace Pier'). The whole pier is painted and decorated, a new restaurant is built on the south side of the pavilion and six ornamental kiosks are erected, each accommodating three shops. About 4,000 lamps are fixed all over the Pier, making it a big attraction in the evenings. In July that year a new pavilion is built as a roller skating rink at the seaward end of the Pier.
1910		A small building is built on the deck at a cost of £2,500 to house a shooting gallery, animated pictures and additional amusements.
1910		An American bowling alley is added.
1911		New additions to the Pier are; the Joy Wheel is added next to promenade, a shooting gallery near the pavilion on the west side and a windbreak is built between Joy Wheel and bowling alley.
1912		The bowling alley moves into shooting gallery
1913		The shore-end section of the Pier known as the 'Parade Extension' is sold to the Hastings Corporation for £7,000.
1913		The entrance to the Pier is purchased and a new bandstand and shelter was to be built, to house 1,000 people under cover and 2,000 in the open air.
1913		The open deck is closed in and a bandstand and shelters were added.
1914		Hastings Council buys a quarter of Hastings Pier (the 220 feet nearest the land) and rebuilt it as a 220-foot square extension of the promenade. A bandstand and two curving large shelters are erected and the extension is officially opened on April 19 1916.

1914		The Joy Wheel and toll booths are removed.
1915		Proceeds from the sale are used to pay for new buildings at the shore-end, south of the extension, to contain an arcade, shops, tea room etc. The aim is to provide shelter all the way along the pier from the tollhouse to the sea-end pavilion.
1916	April	1916. The new bandstand is built. (Visitors were later to complain of having to look at sick people on the hospital balcony nearby, whilst listening to the band.) The new extension is opened.
1917	15-Jul	There is a huge fire on the Pier and the sea-end pavilion is destroyed. The blaze was thought to have been caused by one of the Canadian soldiers stationed in the town discarding a cigarette. Much of the pier was damaged.
1920		A motorboat became a summer attraction on the pier.
1920	Spring	Decorative tall posts are erected along the edge of the extension.
1921		A wooden floor is laid in place of the pavilion for fine weather use.
1922		The new sea-end pavilion is opened; it attracts lots of criticism and was compared with an aircraft-hanger. The centre section of the Pier is enlarged and the battlement lights are added to the parade.
1923		The East Sussex hospital demolished.
1926		The frontage of the Pier is converted to large arcade/foyer with a toll gate at the seaward end of the foyer. Immediately on the west side a new "shore pavilion" theatre is added. The seaward end gains an amusement centre, bowling alley, tea rooms, bar, refreshment kiosk near the pavilion. Also, the rifle range is removed.
1927		The White Rock theatre opened.
1928/9		The Pier is modernised; the rifle range is removed and replaced by a games pavilion. Also, the camera obscura was erected.

1929-1930		The substructure at the south-end was repaired and a small bandstand was added to the area in the spring 1931. The old bowling alley was moved and extended at both ends.
1930s		The shore-end pavilion is reconstructed with a new frontage and is described as "an elegant and perfect example of the 'art deco' style of architecture and fashionable". The interior of the pavilion becomes an intimate theatre with a two-storey foyer, a bar and toilets.
1930s		In the mid 30's a searchlight was attached to the pier to provide light and midnight swimming it was very popular with the youngsters.
1930s		In the 1930's stunt divers performed on the hour. They would dive into the sea from the top deck, tied up and fastened in sacks. They would sink into the sea and reappear later free from the sacks. The crowds loved it!
1938		Storm damage to sea-end, and loss of sea-bed, results in repair costs of £22,000. Business is severely affected by the necessary closure.
1938		The Marine Court development on the seafront is completed.
1939		With the outbreak of World War II the Pier is requisitioned for training purposes.
1940	22-May	Refugees from France and Belgium are landed on Hastings Pier by a Belgian tug. Two men are carrying 13 million Belgian Francs.
1943-1945		25 yards of deck are removed from the middle of the Pier as well as part of the front section as a war time defence measures.
1946	08-Jun	The Pier is re-opened after WWII. The Pier doesn't make a profit to begin with but soon recovered when the pre-war crowds come back.
1947		The sea-end of the Pier is reopened.
1951		The west solarium is added, it sits - from arcade to pavilion.
1956		The East solarium is added.

1958		1958. 1,000 women attended the annual Easter fashion show on the Pier.
1960		The Pier pavilion is modernised.
1960s		In the 60's characters, such as Dr Cullen, the drunken fortune teller with long flowing hair, work on The Pier as does The Great Omani, who lay on a bed of nails or, bound and chained, flung himself from the Pier entertaining visitors.
1960s		During the 60's The Hollies, The Springfields, Gerry and the Pacemakers, Freddie and the Dreamers, the Searchers, Cilla Black, Tom Jones, The Who and The Troggs perform on the Pier.
1960s		In the mid 60's a Townsend hovercraft operates near the Pier.
1961	May	The bandstand is demolished in April and replaced with a mobile bandstand that will be moved to Warrior Square in 1966.
1961	Oct	The game Bingo is launched on the Pier
1964		The Rolling Stones performed on the Pier and returned three more times.
1966		The Hastings Embroidery, a successor to the Bayeux Tapestry by the Royal School of Needlework. It is unveiled in the Pier's Triodome by Princess Alice. The Triodome, which replaced the bandstand demolished in 1961 is specially built to house the embroidery.
1966	Aug	The infamous bank holiday clash of the Mods and the Rockers on Hastings beach.
1967		The new pavilion is built taller.
1968		The Pier is handed back to the Pier Company.
1968		On Saturday 20th January 1968 at 7:45 till 11:45pm Pink Floyd performed on the Pier with Beaufords Image. Tickets were 12/6 in advance and 15/- at the door. Pink Floyd founder Syd Barrett played his last ever show with the band.
1969		The Triodome is converted into an amusement arcade and the shelters are converted to shops.
1972		The Pier is repainted white and celebrates its 100th birthday on August 5 <sup>th</sup> .

1974		The Zoo is closed, the Triodome becomes an amusement arcade and the bandstand shelters are converted to kiosks.
1976	14-Sep	The Pier becomes Grade 2 listed.
1981	April	The final attempt is made for a passenger trip, by the Waverly.
1982		The Pier celebrates its 110th birthday, in honour of this anniversary the Pub on the Pier sells ales, spirits, and fortified wines at the original 1872 prices.
1982		Over 1 million visitors are recorded.
1983		Humberglow Ltd paid £196,000 to acquire the Hastings Pier Company, who had owned the Pier since 1872.
1983		Severe storms damage the Pier causing £100,000 of damage. Winds whip a dome from the top of the halfpenny arcade and it smashed down on another section, shattering a roof, destroying a suntrap and flattening iron railings.
1985		A British light – middleweight boxing title fight took place on the pier.
1986		The Triodome is removed and is bought by Brighton Pier.
1987		The Pier is damaged in the famous hurricane of 1987.
1990		The Pier Preservation Society is started with the aim of restoring the Art Deco façade.
1993		Large storms cause £100,000 damage.
1996		The Pier went on sale for £3.5 million
1999		After a storm in October 1999 the Pier is no longer safe for the public and is closed suddenly when the owners go into voluntary liquidation, with debts of £160,000.
2000		The Pier stands derelict until August when it is purchased by Mundial Invest S.A.
2001	05-May	Hastings Pier changes hands yet again. This time to Ravenclaw Investments Inc. Ravenclaw is a sister company of Mundial Invest S.A. Pier re-opened Major above decks renovation take place.
2005		The Council receives an engineer's report showing that the Pier needed repair work of up to £1.2 million.

2006	16-Jun	Sea end part of the Pier is closed but the apron remains open.
2006	01-Nov	The Pier is found to be so unsafe that the Council imposes a closure order on the Pier beyond the apron.
2007	10-Feb	At a public meeting a campaigning group called Friends of Hastings Pier is set up.
2007	Jul	The Apron of the Pier is reopened.
2008	01-Feb	The Hastings and White Rock Trust is formed.
2008	11-Mar	A gale damages the seaward end of the pier, with two upright columns breaking away from their supports. There are fears that this could be the 'beginning of the end' for the Pier, and there was further minor damage over the following five months.
2008	31-Aug	The Pier is completely closed.
2008	Dec	Heritage Lottery Fund application for £2 million is turned down.
2009	17-Oct	A March is organised in the town to raise awareness of the need to save the Pier, two thousand people take part.
2010	5-Oct	A huge fire destroys much of the Pier
2010	Nov	The Hastings Pier & White Rock Trust submits an application for £8.75m to the Heritage Lottery to restore the substructure of the Pier and renovate the remaining building.
2011		de Rijke Marsh Morgan are announced in January as the winners of the competition to select an architect for the redevelopment of Hastings Pier
2012		Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) awards a grant of £11.4 million.
2013	Aug	A Compulsory Purchase Order is enacted and the Pier is returned to local ownership, which enables the £14m renovation project to go forward.
2014		The reconstruction of Hastings Pier takes two years, from May 2014 until its reopening in May 2016.
2016	May	Hastings Pier reopens.

Steve Peak, author of A Pier Without a Peer, The History of Hastings Pier and Peerless Piers and his website <http://hastingschronicle.net>



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