

LAYER 6A – Events on the pier

The trades people of Ryde were concerned in July 1863, that the Battalion Band's pier concerts: *"...would interfere with the usual tea-hour, the trades people of Ryde would*



be deprived altogether of their al fresco musical evenings during the coming season. We are pleased to find the directors have reconsidered and the performances will take place every Wednesday evening from six to eight. The band have a new uniform, adding much to their picturesqueness....."

In 1865, unsightly transactions were the subject of a complaint. *"...we allude to the practice, lately allowed, of funeral corteges going down the pier during promenade hours. Such sights are not at all desirable in that locality even to the healthy and strong, whilst they are absolutely repulsive to the invalid."* A toll of £50 to deter the practice was suggested.

Other transactions came to a watery conclusion... *"On Monday evening, as one of the Pier Porters was conveying across the gangway the portmanteau of Lord Alfred Paget, he stumbled, and his lordship's property fell into the water, from whence it was ultimately drawn by a fish-hook. To make the accident still more annoying, it so happened that his lordship had received from Her Majesty an invitation to dine at Osborne that evening, and the portmanteau contained his lordship's court dress, which was completely spoiled....."* Did Lord Alfred attend the dinner?

Mr Fisher had a happier outcome. *"We were sorry to hear that Mr J W Fisher, superintendant of Ryde Pier, while showing a lady friend the handsome breast pin presented to him by the Crown Prince of Germany, accidentally let it slip into the sea...On Friday morning, however, the treasure was recovered by a professional diver."*

In 1926, the very existence of the pier was considered a hazard by some. Ryde Music committee suggested: 'warning notices be placed on the foreshore by Ryde Pier.' The General Manager of the Southern Railway Company stated that: *'the fixing of special warning notices appeared to be superfluous as the existence of the structure was so obvious to anyone passing under it, but [they had] no objection to notices being fixed bearing the words 'Beware of Iron Girders'.* No further action was taken.

Now walk past the Bus Station and sit in the Rose Gardens.

Image: People on Ryde Pier from an old print