

After our very satisfying lunch, it is time for each of you to make a decision. I will be heading for the pier and RNLI coastguard station and in doing so going past Verdi's where we will be meeting up once more for afternoon coffee and cake, or ice cream, in fact anything that you fancy at Vedi's! So, you have some free time; you want to walk on past the pier and up onto the headland or head back into Mumbles town or just walk around the bay; up to you.

We will all meet up again in front of the Bistro at 5.30.



Off we go, and for most of us that means turning right and heading along the bay in the direction of the pier. but the sky is looking a bit grey that way, so fingers crossed.



Weather a bit better now, still rather changeable.

Soon we are passing Verdi's, don't weaken and go inside, reserve that for a little longer; which means you will have a larger appetite for their delights!

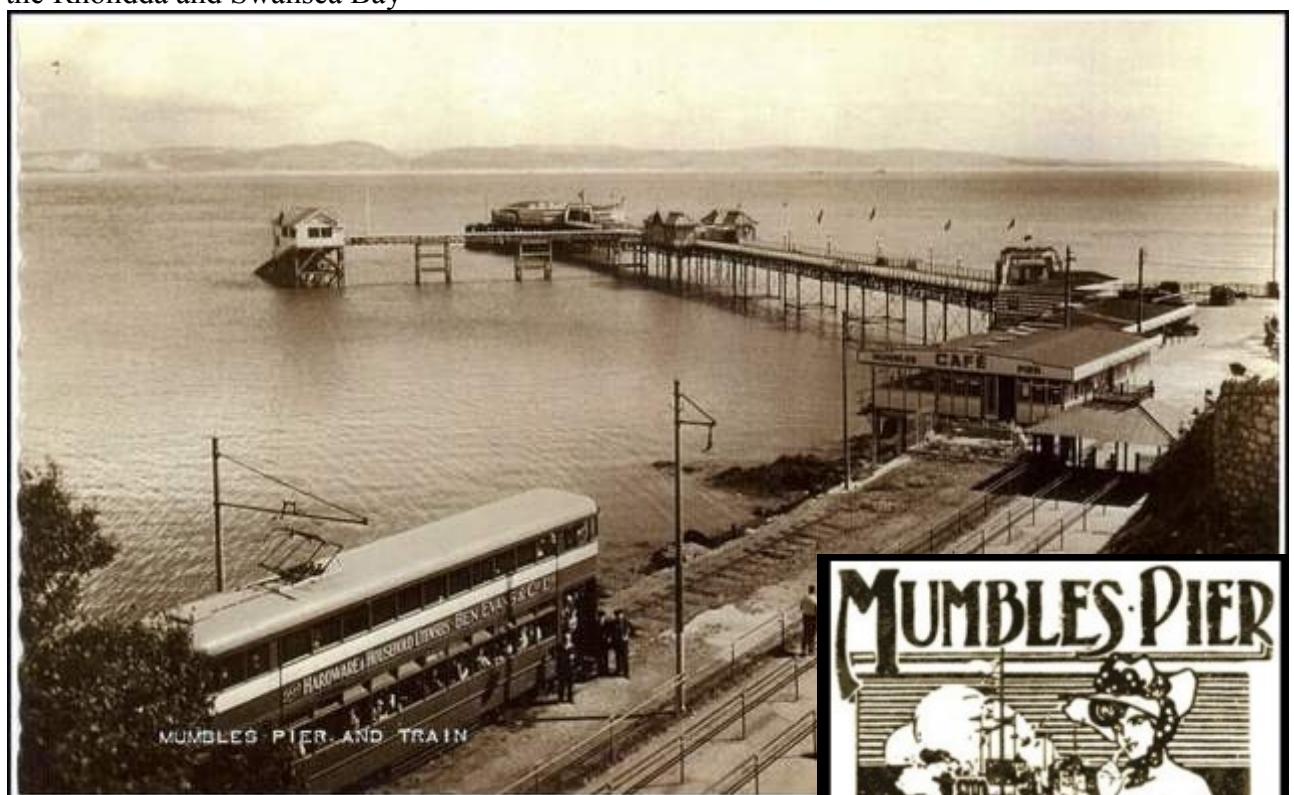


A few minutes more and the pier comes into sight.



As we arrive at the pier let me tell you a little of its story.

The Mumbles Pier was not originally intended to be a pleasure Pier, but was intended to help alleviate congestion at Swansea Docks. However, the completion was not welcomed by the Docks, and shortly after opening the Pier became used solely for recreational use – this is shown in the absence of many of the ornate entertainment buildings seen on other period Piers of the time. Designed by W. Sutcliffe Marsh, the 835 foot pier opened on May 10th 1898. It had cost £10,000. It was the terminus for the Swansea and Mumbles Railway, the promoter being John Jones Jenkins of the Rhondda and Swansea Bay



Railway. However, as the new century dawned, significant weaknesses in the lattice steelwork and hand railings were becoming apparent and some of the side rails and seating areas were virtually rusting away. A large section of the decking at the far end of the pier had to be removed. Restoration work



required replacing steel and timber elements from the piles upwards and was estimated to cost in excess of £3m. The pier was not generating sufficient funds to cover the work required and, as a privately owned pier, was not eligible for most public grants.

A number of schemes were looked at over the years and eventually a dramatic new look – part of delayed plans to develop the foreshore and headland by Mumbles Pier – was revealed in February 2018. The plans showed images of up to 30 foreshore flats looking out into the bay. The headland building would be five storeys instead of six and would not need cliff-top access. A statement from Ameco, the pier's owners, confirmed that the developments would finance the restoration of the Victorian-era pier. In April 2018, preparation work for the long-awaited restoration of Mumbles Pier began for a start date of June 1st for the multi-million pound project and completion by the end of the year. The following year, the £3.2 million project would include the installation of additional decking, enlarging the amount of public space near the foreshore.

The pier in its entirity is still not opened to the public, though it is hoped that some form of temporary opening will be possible later this year., however we can visit the RNLI station. When the station first opened, it did not have a boathouse and the lifeboat was stored under the cliffs. In 1866 the first boathouse was built and it was replaced with a larger boathouse when a replacement



lifeboat needed more room. A slipway was constructed for launching the lifeboat in 1888 and in 1897, Mumbles Railway and Pier Company constructed a new slipway for the RNLI at no cost to the institution.



The new station
opened in 2014





Back on 'dry' land there is a little time before we walk back for afternoon tea. Perhaps you want to pop into the amusement arcade or bowling centre for a while?



or perhaps squeeze in a swift but calorie laden ice cream?





or perhaps to take advantage of some of the amenities? Incidentally, that sloping wall behind the sign has a road behind it which leads up to the headlands above the bay and can be recommended on a nice day if you have an hour or two to spare.

It's a good ten to fifteen minute walk back to Verdi's, so just enough time to contemplate the pleasure of deciding the contents of ones afternoon tea. Several of you have been here before, including Nicola and of course many of us enjoyed the last time we were in Mumbles.

Enjoy the view once more on our walk back.



MUMBLES

SWANSEA BAY

