

= St Anne 's Pier =

St Anne 's Pier is a Victorian era pleasure pier in the English seaside resort of St Anne 's @-@ on @-@ the @-@ Sea , Lancashire . It lies on the estuary of the River Ribble . The pier , designed by A. Dowson , was completed in 1885 and was one of the earliest public buildings in St Anne 's , a 19th @-@ century planned town . The pier was originally intended to be a sedate promenading venue for the resort 's visitors , but attractions were later added . Changes made to the estuary channels to improve access to Preston Dock left the pier on dry land and ended its steamer services to Blackpool and Liverpool .

A Tudor @-@ style entrance was built in 1899 . Early 20th @-@ century additions included a Moorish @-@ style pavilion in 1904 and the Floral Hall in 1910 . The Moorish Pavilion was destroyed by fire in 1974 , shortly after the town 's centenary ; the Floral Hall burned down in 1982 . Originally 914 feet (279 m) long , the pier was reduced to 600 feet (180 m) by the demolition of the seaward end . English Heritage has designated the pier a Grade II listed building .

= = Background = =

St Anne 's @-@ on @-@ the @-@ Sea is a planned seaside resort on the Fylde coast , at the mouth of the River Ribble , in Lancashire . It was developed in the 19th century , largely by the St Anne 's Land & Building Company . The company was formed in 1874 and leased land for the new town from the estate of the local Clifton family . Towards the end of the 19th century , pleasure piers became a common feature of English seaside resorts , and by the 1870s there were already two piers in nearby Blackpool , one in Southport and one 3 @.@ 5 miles (5 @.@ 6 km) away in Lytham . The wording of the land company 's original lease indicates that a pier was probably planned for St Anne 's from its beginning . A subsidiary , the St Anne 's @-@ on @-@ the @-@ Sea Pier and Improvements Company was formed in 1877 . The company directors believed that a pier at St Anne 's would offer visitors better conditions for fishing and boating than those at neighbouring resorts .

= = Construction = =

There was some delay in building the new pier because of an economic downturn . Engineers inspected the site in 1879 , and construction began in 1880 . The architect was A. Dowson . The pier is constructed of cast iron columns and lattice girders with wooden decking and intricate decorative iron @-@ work on the deck . The columns were sunk to a depth of 50 feet (15 m) . The original structure was 914 feet (279 m) long and 19 feet (5 @.@ 8 m) wide . It included a band kiosk built of glass and iron . Construction cost £ 18 @, @ 000 and took more than five years . The pier was opened by Frederick Stanley on 15 June 1885 , in a ceremony attended by local dignitaries , school children , the Preston Militia band , and the Order of Mechanics . The opening featured the launch of a lifeboat named the Laura Janet , whose crew was lost the following year in the Southport and St Anne 's lifeboats disaster .

In 1891 a wooden landing jetty at the end of the pier was extended , in an L shape , by engineering and architecture firm Garlick and Sykes . The new iron extension was three storeys high and measured 120 feet (37 m) long by 90 feet (27 m) wide . After its addition , the pier was 945 feet (288 m) in length . The jetty was used for steamer services from Blackpool and Liverpool . The passing of the Ribble Navigation and Preston Dock Act of 1883 led to dredging of the river channels to improve access to Preston Dock . These changes to the estuary meant that the pier was eventually left on dry land , ruining the resort 's steamer trade .

A new entrance building was constructed in 1899 to a design by J. D. Harker . This was built in the Mock Tudor style of red brick with imitation timber framing . In 1901 work began to enlarge the pier and add a Moorish @-@ style pavilion . It had a seating capacity of 920 and measured 84 feet (26 m) by 56 feet (17 m) . The width of the pier was increased to 34 feet (10 m) . These additions were also undertaken by Garlick and Sykes and opened on 2 April 1904 .

In 1910 , further additions included the Floral Hall , adjacent to the Moorish Pavilion at the seaward end . The hall ? a winter garden and concert hall ? had a seating capacity of 850 ; it was built of steel and plate glass to a design by Arnold England .

= = Attractions = =

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries , the developers of St Anne 's were keen to attract a more refined market than Blackpool 's working @-@ class excursionists . The pier was originally intended to provide little more than a sedate promenading facility for the resort 's visitors ; initially the only other attractions were a band kiosk and a sweet shop .

The pier 's Floral Hall hosted concerts and music hall acts . Its first resident orchestra was Miss Kate Erl and Her Ladies Orchestra . Subsequent conductors of the pier 's orchestra were Clarice Dunnington , William Rees , Lionel Johns and Norman George . Artists who have performed on the pier include Gracie Fields , Leslie Henson , Russ Conway and George Formby .

In 1954 , an amusement arcade was added to the pier ; this now occupies three quarters of the length of the structure . Alterations later that decade included the addition of a restaurant and replacement of the decking . By the 1970s the pier 's amusements included crazy golf , a miniature zoo and live theatre performances .

= = Damage and recent history = =

In 1962 the holdings of the St Anne 's Land & Building Company (including the pier) were bought by the Amalgamated Investment Company , based in London . Some alterations to the pier were made by the new owners , including the addition of an aviary and a reptile house . The Floral Hall was refurbished and turned into a Tyrolean @-@ style beer garden .

A centenary concert for the town by violinist Yehudi Menuhin was held on 7 June 1974 and attended by Anne , Princess Royal . On the night of 20 July , the Moorish Pavilion (known from 1970 as the Sultan 's Palace) was destroyed in a fire .

On 6 December 1976 , following the liquidation of the Amalgamated Investment Company , the pier was bought by the Webb family for £ 30 @,@ 000 . They initially planned to repair the fire damage . The Floral Hall , which had been adjacent to the Moorish Pavilion , was destroyed by fire on 23 July 1982 ; the pavilions were deemed irreparable and the seaward end of the pier was demolished . Following protests against the demolition by campaigners , the local council decided that the final 150 feet (46 m) should be retained to protect the character of the pier , so the remains of the ruined landing jetty still exist . The pier , most of which is enclosed , now ends with an uncovered stretch of deck that opens out into two hexagonal platforms with small pavilions and shelters . The length of the remaining intact structure is 600 feet (180 m) . The pier 's 21st @-@ century attractions include the amusement arcade , cafés and shops ; the seaward end is usually closed to visitors .

English Heritage designated St Anne 's Pier a Grade II listed building on 21 September 1973 . It is listed as part of a group of promenade structures that includes a bandstand , a lifeboat monument , a pavilion and two shelters . Lynn F. Pearson (1991) writes that the pier 's Moorish Pavilion and Floral Hall were " two of the best [pier pavilions] in design terms " . According to Chris Mawson and Richard Riding (2008) , the pier is " well regarded " for its wrought iron work .