

CLIFF RAILWAY TIMES

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Preserve and Promote Babbacombe Cliff Railway

Issue 3

July 2006

A Resounding Success!

Babbacombe Cliff Railway 80th Year Celebration April 1st 2006.

Large Crowds on Babbacombe Downs and Oddicombe Beach



The Friends of Babbacombe Cliff Railway (FBCR) received a grant of £4,700 in March 2006 from the Heritage Lottery 'Awards For All' towards staging the 80th Anniversary celebration day on 1st April 2006. Numerous local businesses and individuals also contributed to the event.

Prior to the day, volunteers freely gave up their spare time overseen by professional painters Mike and Dave Bailey. Working from the scaffolding erected around the building they painted the top station in as (near as possible) the original maroon and cream colours. The volunteers continued to work on unperturbed by intermittent heavy showers.

Thanks to Mike and Dave's expertise encouragement, and occasionally their equipment, the tenacity of all involved completed the work in time. They were unable to paint the front of the station overlooking the tracks due restricted access under health and safety reasons. However, to the workers laying the new tracks it presented no problem. They painted it themselves! Thanks Guys! Tony Mason from AJM Windows supplied and fitted the FBCR notice board on the wall near the top station, unveiled on the day.

The previous days of rain and wind disappeared. Perfect conditions-blue skies, sunshine. It was as if the weather had decided to join the celebration! From 6.30 am onwards on the morning of the event, FBCR members were actively finalising the preparation of the top and bottom station areas.

Flags and bunting decorated the top station area, stalls set up paths swept. All was ready.



On his arrival at the top station Rev. Peter Killick, Chairman of Torbay Council, was greeted by David Cooper, then gave the opening ceremony speech.

Mr Richard Harris replicated as near as possible the 1926 photo.



Copies of Mr Harris 2006 photo available £1.50 each including postage.

Details: contact FBCR secretary.

After the release of eighty maroon and cream balloons celebration activities commenced. A free bus service was supplied by Torbay Council and cliff railway contractors, as cliff railway refurbishment was not then completed, transported visitors to and from Babbacombe Downs and Oddicombe Beach. Some visitors walked to Oddicombe beach via the cliff path to view the renovation progress others thought of the strenuous walk back up the cliff pathway and used the free bus service.

Classic vintage motor vehicles were on display at Sunningdale Holiday Apartments car park and at Oddicombe beach. Also at Oddicombe beach was a Green Goddess fire engine.

Members from TOADS, a local amateur dramatic and operatic society, performed at the top station a repertoire of songs from Summer Holiday and toured the area in 1960's Routemaster bus. Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard and St Johns vehicles were present. The Lions Club of Torbay set up a football challenge stall. Members at the FBCR stall sold badges, prize draw tickets, handed out free

Torbay attraction vouchers and signed up new members. There were so many entrants in the children's painting competition at the beach café, organised by Gayle and Adele Farrell, they ran out of free goodie bags. However, no child left empty handed. Paignton Zoo, Living Coasts, Torquay United programmes and signed footballs were just some of the donated prizes.

During the morning The Torbay Brass Band in their first public appearance of the year played a selection of stirring music. Dart Valley Stompers jazzed up the afternoon, their traditional jazz music set many a foot tapping and a few visitors dancing.

Babbacombe Lions organised an evening quiz at the Buccaneer Inn.

To all who contributed and support the FBCR albeit financial or hands-on your efforts collimated in a resoundingly successful 2006 celebration day.



Right Royal Day Visiting Babbacombe for the reunion weekend of HMS Glory, at the Trecarn Hotel from Friday March 31 to Monday April 3, I was delighted to come across the 80th birthday celebrations of the cliff railway when taking a Saturday morning stroll. It was the highlight of my visit and I enjoyed seeing the many 'friends' dressed in costumes from 1926.

I travelled on the bus down to the beach and listened to the brass band and saw the wonderful vintage cars meeting up with a local lady called Janice Anderson we chattered and she promised to send me your newspaper.

How delighted I was to see the photo taken on that day and there am in the that day and there I am in the front row, fourth from the right, all in pink.

I spoke to Cllr Peter Killick, chairman of Torbay Council and said that I was visiting from London. I explained that my husband was an ex-navy World War II Fleet Air Arm pilot and also that we were the Pearly King and Queen of the Old Kent Road. If we had known earlier of this splendid event we would have worn our buttons and helped with a 'right royal' send off to this marvellous day.

Please thank everyone who organised the festivities.

DOREEN GOLDING
Pearly Queen

Note from the Chairman It is my pleasure to pass on some good news, the railway is now running once more transporting passengers to the beach. The regular service started on Saturday 24th June 2006 at 9.30 am, a number of members were present to ride in the first car. The new livery is a vast improvement on the Torbay colours, we are indebted to Adele and Gayle Farrell for arranging a painting party to apply the maroon and cream to the lower station.

Included with this newsletter (**see note next page:**) are the details of the presentation made at the Extraordinary General Meeting on Tuesday 20 June 2006, about the proposals for the setting up of a not for profit Community Interest Company (CIC), to operate the Babbacombe Cliff Railway. It also includes the main points included in the Heads of Terms and the Management Agreement that will form the Lease.



Welcome Guest Many on the day were unaware of a welcome guest Michel Azema, editor of 'Funimag' an Internet magazine with articles and pictures from all over the world on funicular railways.



Michel heard about the special event and flew over from his home in Paris for the weekend.

A week after the celebration his 'Funimag' website featured pictures and text on Babbacombe Cliff Railway.

Funimag: www.funimag.com

Send in anecdotes, pictures, snaps, photos, anything that may be of interest on Babbacombe Cliff Railway to readers of this newsletter or website.

Baboon Traveller

One day we had a big queue going up returning passengers were handing in any tickets for their return journey.



One man handed in a deck chair ticket and the railway ticket was pink.

I said " No sir that's not it, it is pink like the man's behind "

My opposite number on the down side just burst out laughing!

I did not realise what I had said!

At the meeting there was a unanimous acceptance of the proposal, so now the work begins to set up the organisation, prepare all of the paperwork, marketing material, job descriptions and other documentation. A procedure will be set up to select the Directors of the Company and this process will begin shortly. I am sure that you will welcome this new era and the opportunity we have to greatly improve the service that this attraction offers.

Hopefully you have found the new website if not you should attempt to do so. John Lawrence has done a super job in setting up this site, which is more accessible, and more informative than the previous one. **John Ayres**

Note: The formation of the not for profit Community Interest Company (CIC) to operate Babbacombe Cliff Railway is one of the most important changes for many years to a major tourist attraction within Torbay. Setting out a proposed framework for operation and management of Babbacombe Cliff Railway for the next 40 years. Therefore, Heads of Terms published as a separate item and enclosed with this newsletter. Please read it J.M.L.

Contacts: If you need information or for any reason to contact a Society official please do not ring Arthur Christian on his office number or call into his office. Arthur can be contacted on his mobile number or through his email address. John Ayres is also available on 01803 391415.

Jump Seat

Another time the bell had been rung for the last car up and it was full. I had all the cash to carry up and flatly refused to walk up carrying it



The chap on the bottom station called Wally said, I could ride on the little seat under the car and he would ride outside. Reg Tom the manager in those days his face was a picture when he saw me come out from under the car at the top station!

Prize Draw Winning Tickets Drawn at Babbacombe Fayre 21st June 2006

1st Prize £100	No: 02102
2nd Prize £50	No: 05967
3rd Prize £25	No: 02637
4th Prize Robin Elt Voucher	No: 06705
5th Prize M & S Voucher £10	No: 07229
6th Prize M & S Voucher £10	No: 04865
7th Prize Golfer Figure	No: 03928
8th Prize Holiday Figure	No: 08929
9th Prize Gardener Figure	No: 03931
10th Prize Painter Figure	No: 04982

Dog Day

Sunday 30th April over two hundred people, many with dogs, enjoyed the final day that dogs were allowed on Oddicombe beach until September, as long as their dogs are kept on a lead. Owners will still be able to use the hard standing on Oddicombe beach during the summer.

Chairperson of the FBCR, John Ayres, chose three winners from over fifty dogs entered into the canine beauty contest. Each rewarded with goodie bags provided by Gilberts Pet Shop St Marychurch Precinct, sponsor of the day's events. The three dog races provided entertainment in what was an enjoyable day.



Memories of The Babbacombe Cliff Railway

When I was seven years old I used to live at Western Road St Marychurch. The cliff

railway was about a twenty minutes walk away, and during the school holidays I used to go and watch the cliff railway just about every day. I used to tell my mum and dad I was playing with friends at Babbacombe, as I thought I would get into trouble for going up there!

After a while I guess my face was familiar and got to know the men on the cliff railway (the operators), in those days which was in 1970 nothing was too much trouble and people could be trusted. After a while I was allowed to press the start buttons now and again, but I was never allowed to open the car platforms or doors.

One day I can vividly remember a small problem and I was allowed into the top station engine room with an engineer. I can remember that electrical/oily smell like it was yesterday. After a while I was promoted to tea boy and used to ride up and down delivering tea to the man at the bottom station (paying of course), sometimes he would let me ring the bell at the bottom the call for last order! As time went on I got to know different operators, and used to dread the thought of someone being there who knew my mum and dad but it never happened until one day.....

I arrived there one day and performed the 10 o'clock tea duties, down to the bottom station only to find my uncle Eddie working at the bottom station! That's it I thought and didn't go there for a while after.

Eventually one day I was getting a lift with my friends and saw uncle on the way to my house with a saw to do a job! That was the end of my little secret but my parents were ok about it.

I wonder if anyone out there remembers these times and I would love to visit the engine room again one day. Congratulations for the recent refurbishment program and I hope the BCR gives plenty of fun to others. **Steve McKimm. Bedfordshire**

Send in your articles or recollections for publication in the next issue of newsletter and/or website!

The 'Two Funiculars Walk' Arthur Christian links Lynton and Lynmouth with Babbacombe a 125 mile, four day outing.

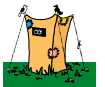


Nuggit and I met up with Ashley General Manager of Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway on Thursday 15th June. We chatted about their excellent business then posed for publicity photos with the operators, three of our FBCR members, Jill and Ted Gillon and Emily, my daughter (and driver). Just after mid-day, Ashley and the gang walked with us to the start of the Two Moors Way and waved us off in glorious sunshine.

Seven hours later (most of it walking backwards to take in the stunning views) after a brief stop at the outdoor store in Simonsbath for an ice cream (before she closed to watch the England match) we arrived hot and tired in Withypool. The man in the Royal Oak phoned 'Andrew' who without hesitation gave us permission to pitch in his field by the river located behind the immaculate public toilets. Awoke during the night moon beaming into the far end of our canopy then drifted off to sleep rudely awakened by Nuggit launching out after an early rabbit!

Army rations provided fat-boys breakfast before we hit the trail, arrived hot and tired nine hours later at Witheridge. Welcomed by a man who turned out to be the proprietor of the 'Mitre' he brought out a complementary ice-cold lager because he was not open! Waited just long enough for bar to open, recommended the old vicarage, lovely people let us camp in their back garden for £1, given access to a downstairs loo and outside tap, luxury! No guessing which pub we went to for a big steak dinner and several lagers.

Next morning off to Drewesteignton a ten-hour trek more astounding scenery and beautiful villages including Morchard Bishop. All their gardens on the day open to the public for charity sadly not enough time to stop for more than an ice cream. The Drewe Arms proprietor let us set up camp at the bottom of his garden. After a clean up, bought food and drinks he and the locals told ghost stories including one about a wartime US soldier who haunts the back garden!



Following a somewhat restless night, hiding behind the dog, we set off bright and early, past Castle Drogo in the mist and across the moor to Widecombe, stopped too long in the pub for a cider and ploughman's lunch. Nuggit jealous of my food spent two hours sleep in the shade! Arrived in Holne at six after being chased by cows, taking a wrong turn (ouch, stinging nettles), lost multi-tool (including can opener) a sunburned nose and found pub shut, sign read "Opens at 9-10.30 FOR DRINK ONLY! We divvied up on the kids football pitch, at the camping barn had a hot shower all for only £3.40. The woman kindly opened my last can of tuna (missing multi-tool) feasted on rice, fish, and dog biscuit! On the doorstep of the pub at nine and 'fell out' at ten thinking myself a real lightweight.



Breakfast, hot chocolate for me, oatmeal block for Nuggit, then made our final assault on Dartmoor at seven. Straight into wind which turned into sideways rain soaked within minutes, despite the hastily thrown on waterproof. Each time I wiped glasses to read map, map case obscured and vice versa. Took a simple compass bearing then headed into the clouds. Found a streambed with my entire right side, but got no wetter! The bearing (and Nuggit's intuition) brought us to the granite MW marker at the top of the seven-kilometre track then into Ivybridge, drying out on the way. All Day Brunch for me, tin of dog food for Nugs. Took the bus to Totnes (roads between too tiresome and dangerous). Then a three hour walk into Babbacombe, Ashley from Lynmouth joined us, excellent company for the last leg. After stopping at the Fortune of War for some rough cider, arrived on time for photo call at top station, pleased to see the FBCR members who had taken the trouble to be there. Nuggit especially pleased to see 'er indoors in whose arms he promptly fell asleep! Had to wake him for the photo, he soon bucked up at the smell of fish from Drakes on the way home to a well-deserved bath and beer (me not the dog).

Next year slightly different route, slower pace, extra rations, beer tokens and with company to raise funds for deserving causes. Walkies? Oh, come on Nuggit stop hiding under the stairs!



Thanks to Bett Jackson for Baboon Traveller & Jump Ticket. Bett worked on the Cliff Railway as cashier from 1957-1966.

FBCR Committee

Chairperson-John Ayres
jayres@blueyonder.co.uk
Secretary-Arthur Christian
fbcrcsecretary@hotmail.co.uk
Treasurer-Kerry Gillon
Nick Gillon-Marketing
Jill Gillon-Draw Promoter
Adele & Gayle Farrell-Events
adele@oddcombebeach.wanadoo.co.uk
Derek Latham, Charles Blake, Bill Becker,
Lindsay Yellands, Paul Hammond, Richard House
John Lawrence-FBCR Website-Cliff Railway Times.

FBCR Evening Buffet Friday 17th November 2006 at the Trecarne Hotel Babbacombe 7.30pm.

Entertainment 60s/70s Style, Professional Auctioneer, Bar. £10 per Head.



Forty to fifty quality items auctioned during the evening including, **No's 1 to 10, No 25, No 50 and No 100** (Bids not less than £40) from a special commission of **one hundred** limited edition prints. Each individually signed and numbered by the artist **Sue Tiffin.**

Pre-orders £25 each. **Not Numbers 1 to 10, 25, 50 and 100 auction only**

Contact the FBCR secretary:fbcrcsecretary@hotmail.co.uk

Copy for publication in newsletter and/or FBCR website:
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