

# CLIFF RAILWAY TIMES

[www.friendsofbabbacombecliff railway.org.uk](http://www.friendsofbabbacombecliff railway.org.uk)



Preserve and Promote Babbacombe Cliff Railway

Issue 4

October 2006



## Marriage in a Carriage at Babbacombe Cliff Railway



Friday 8th September 2006 2.00 pm

On a bright sunny day in September 2006, an historic occasion took place in Babbacombe and St Marychurch. Denise Arnold and Graham Boulter from Fleet in Hampshire became the first couple ever married on the Babbacombe Cliff Railway.

The morning prior to the ceremony FBCR members had decorated, based on a sunflower theme, one of the cliff railway carriages with white and yellow ribbons, bows and flowers.



**Left:** Denise with Sue Wheatley deputy superintendent registrar for Torbay. **Right:** The couple with guests.

Denise and Graham accompanied by wedding guests, Sue Wheatley, Deputy Superintendent Registrar for Torbay and her assistant began the journey down to the beach, the ceremony commenced on the way down.

When the carriage arrived at the lower station the doors were then opened enabling all guests to participate. Some had previously traveled down to await the bride and groom. The signing of the registry took place within the carriage.



The happy couple were photographed and interviewed by reporters from local radio and newspapers and BBC South West television covering the historic occasion. The couple along with their guests then strolled along Oddicombe beach promenade, occasionally stopping for wedding photographs.

There followed champagne toasts and savouries organised by Adele and Galyle on Oddicombe Beach. Denise and Graham and guests then rode the carriage back up to the top station. Then onto the Anchorage Hotel, Babbacombe for their wedding reception. They planned to go to Scilly in October for their honeymoon.



**Right:** Torbay Council's seasonal manager of the Babbacombe Cliff Railway Bill Becher with Denise and Graham at the upper station after the wedding.

Adele and Gayle from Oddicombe Beach Cafe said "It was great to be part of history in the making and a lovely site to see a bride and groom strolling along the beach, enjoying Babbacombe at its best."



**Congratulations Denise and Graham and Best Wishes.**

Since 1st April 1995 following its Royal Assent in 1994 the Marriage Act allows suitable approved premises licenses for marriage ceremonies. Babbacombe Cliff Railway is one of the sixteen licensed in Torbay, South Devon, UK.

## Summary of the Main Points of FBCR General Meeting Held at St Annes Hall, Babbacombe on September 12th 2006.

John Ayres, the chairperson, began by welcoming the forty or so of those present at the meeting and then offered congratulations on behalf of all to St Marychurch & District Action Group for their work in achieving Silver Gilt award in this year's South-West Britain in Bloom Competition. Organised by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS).

John Ayres spoke on the progress of the lease arrangements. A draft lease should be available for the FBCR committee by 20th September (no details to date). He went on to explain that the legislation involved in the takeover is still being investigated with help from Richard Hutchings of Kitsons Hutchings (FBCR solicitor who has given clear and precise advice at no cost so far) to ensure that there are no future problems.

Charles Blake then explained progress on the selection of director's for the new Community Interest Company (CIC). Charles suggested in order to retain continuity, as recommended by the committee, the new CIC board should include Arthur Christian, and David Cooper for his technical expertise (cont) cliff railways. David previously made it clear he would be unable undertake a directors position until after the completion of the refurbishment programme due to a possible conflict of interest.

Charles Blake presented an update on the selection of directors. Applications for directors had been publicised as agreed and six applications were received - Penny Crump, Les Jennings, John Ayres, Gayle Farrell, Adele Farrell and Lindsay Yelland. All six were selected subject to ratification by FBCR members.

As eight of the nine planned directors places were filled, John Ayres asked members to vote that they approve those selected by the panel. The motion was carried by a majority show of hands. The chairman thanked Charles and Bob Hunt on behalf of the members for their time and commitment to the selection process.

John Ayres briefed members on a business plan, a draft would be ready for board members at their next meeting on Monday September 18th. In addition, it was hoped to have the management agreement for discussion shortly.

Although some strategic marketing of the Babbacombe Cliff Railway by Babbacombe Bay Marketing Group and Attractions Marketing Partnership is currently in place and planned to continue under the new management, further advance marketing is required - for obvious reasons. Various options would be examined over the next few months for office, storage and retail premises in order to run the CIC professionally from its inception.

John Ayres asked members to be aware that as so many of the committee had been approved to become directors of the new CIC, the possibility of future difficulties or conflicts of interest could arise. He asked members to consider taking an active part on the committee.

He congratulated those members who attended the first wedding on the Babbacombe Cliff Railway on the 8th of September 2006 and hoped for more such occasions in future. In particular, Gayle and Adele Farrell for decorating the carriage and organising the drinks and savouries at Oddicombe beach for Denise an Graham and their guests after the service.

Arthur Christian the FBCR secretary gave members a brief summary on the proposed forthcoming Winter Social and auction event on Friday 17th November. He made a request for quality items donations to be deposited with Bill Becher at the top station as soon as possible. Donations totalling £60 enabled Penny Crump, Gayle Farrell and himself to attend funding application courses at St Annes Hall within the next few weeks.

Jill Gillon gave an update on present membership; 416 individual members, 9 under sixteen's and 9 corporate members. As Treasurer Kerry Gillon was unable to attend, a summary of the accounts was read out by John Ayres. The secretary would prepare a report to Awards For All regarding their funding of the 1st April celebration day with a request for any surplus funds to be retained to help with current projects.

John Ayres spoke on the recent and planned forthcoming series of lectures presented to clubs and nursing homes that had resulted in additional corporate membership applications. It is hoped that Jim Gill's archive of film along with activities since March 2005 would be available for presenting at future lectures.

The meeting concluded at just after 9pm.

**I have endeavored to compile a fair and accurate synopsis of said meeting from copy of minutes received J.M.L.**

## Banana's at Carnival

Wednesday 26th  
July 2006 FBCR



members dressed in maroon and cream outfits took part in the Torquay Carnival procession.

The distinctive reconditioned cliff railway advertising trailer towed by a vehicle summounted by a banana boat.

Members handed out cliff railway information leaflets and copies of the 'Cliff Railway Times' and collected charity donations along the route.

All the money collected by FBCR members during the event went directly to the carnival organisers to distribute amongst charities of their choice. In 2005 Torbay Carnival organisers paid out over £15,000 in donations to local charities.

Sponsors for the reconditioning of cliff railway trailer, Oddicombe Beach Cafe, Beach Activity Centre, Beach Shop and the FBCR.

**Torbay 2006 Christmas Carnival**  
2nd December 2006.

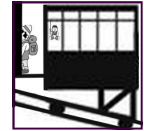
[www.torbaycarnival.co.uk](http://www.torbaycarnival.co.uk)



## 'Riding the Rails' Staff Anecdotes

Summer 2006

A child in her fathers back carrier reached up, clung to one of the ceiling straps, and would not let go.



Her father unaware of his child had hold of the strap then began to exit the carriage. A cautionary restraining hand on the fathers shoulder by another passenger warned him just in time!

A mother with a pushchair when requested to 'hold on tightly please' simply griped the pushchair!

As the carriage began to leave the bottom station, she started to fall backwards still holding the pushchair.

An attentive fellow passenger saved her!

Quips to passengers at the top station before departure 'It is all down hill from here' and at the bottom station before ascent 'It's an uphill struggle' 'You are about to go up in the world'

**Anon.**

Send anecdotes, pictures, snaps, photos, of Babbacombe Cliff Railway that may interest readers to:  
[jmlecliff railwaytimes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jmlecliff railwaytimes@hotmail.co.uk)

### Winter Party

### Friends of Babbacombe Cliff Railway (FBCR) Winter Party & Fun Auction Including Buffet.

Bar and Entertainment 60s/70s Style.  
Friday 17th November 2006 7.30pm to Midnight.  
Trecarn Hotel, Palermo Road, Babbacombe.

Tickets available £10 per person. Enquiries & Reservations  
FBCR Secretary Arthur Christian e-mail:

[fbcsecretary@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fbcsecretary@hotmail.co.uk) Mobile: 07989536450

If you are able to provide an item/items for the auction.  
Please contact the FBCR

Auctioneer for the Fundraising Evening.

**Richard Bearne**

**Bearnes Auction House  
Exeter.**



## Bands in the Sun.

Weather predictions of rain on August Bank Holiday Sunday proved to be unfounded, it turned out to be a fine sunny day. A small stage adjoining the promenade had been constructed for the two bands booked to perform on.

First, to arrive were 'Strange Fixation' a group of local young people some of whom determined to enjoy their last summer before university life, which lay ahead of them set-up their equipment and commenced to play at about 3.pm.

The number of spectators slowly increased as music emanating from the beach attracted the attention of visitors to Babbacombe Downs high above. Their curiosity aroused they ventured down via the pathway and cliff railway to join in. Jonathan, lead singer of "Strange Fixation" played solo on his guitar during the band changeover his audience sang along to well-known Jack Johnson songs



The second group 'The Rumour' working to a tight schedule due to another gig at the Spinning Wheel that evening, had an anxious moment, their lead guitarist had not arrived! Eventually a lonely figure appeared, clutching a guitar running along the promenade. Once again, the beach was alive with people singing and dancing their session closed with 'Ghostbusters'.

Slowly the beach emptied as the audience dispersed, although a few remained not wishing for the day to end. The day finally drew to its conclusion as they along with their memories journeyed homewards.

Thank to 'Strange Fixation' and 'The Rumour' for donating their time to the Friends of the Babbacombe Cliff Railway. Both bands expressed that would like to return next year.

Hopefully more bands, more music, more sunshine and more support.

## Roman Invasion of Babbacombe

The Roman Invasion of Babbacombe began on Saturday 29th July 2006.

The rain failed to dampen the spirits of all taking part. Around 100 runners some from as far as New Zealand, all dressed in Roman costumes participated in the coastal run.



Their IronHorses' (coaches) halted near Kents Cavern, legionnaires alighted and assembled in a nearby location to await orders then set off at a fast pace (running) towards their objective. Many of the local inhabitants bemused to see the army of invaders in full costume running across Anstey cove and Walls Hill. It was hilarious to see the expressions on the faces of some onlookers as the Romans passed by!



The legionnaires re-grouped at 'The Buccaneer' (inn) Babbacombe Downs to consume their liquid rations (essential fluid replacement!) then continued refreshed and fortified onwards. The leading cohorts commandeered the two four wheeled chariots (Cliff Railway carriages) to transport the by then weary legionnaires down to Oddicombe Beach.



Their galleon (Stuart Cruise Vessel) waiting off Oddicombe beach weighed anchor once all had boarded and set sail on the homewards journey.

Or maybe onwards to another part of the coastline and continue the invasion!

Some of the extremely shy participants, were spotted around Topsham Exeter the night before the invasion (Friday 28th July 2006) wearing red dresses, collecting donations for FORCE a major local cancer charity in Exeter Devon.

FORCE-Friends of the Oncology and Radiotherapy Centre in Exeter [www.forcecancercharity.co.uk/](http://www.forcecancercharity.co.uk/)

The charity has supported clinical and scientific research for the past twelve years through the provision of laboratory facilities, equipment also funded project grants, doctoral post-doctoral and MSc studentships.

Next time you see a FORCE collection box on your travels (running or walking) or even a red dress, remember the Topsham Red Dress Night & Roman Invasion Day please donate. 'Veni, vidi, vici' most apt, all participants of the event were determined to enjoy themselves and live up a wet day. You certainly did and brought smiles to many a face.



Did I really say shy participants!!!  
**Thanks guys!**

## More 'Riding the Rails'

Answers to frequent questions by holidaymakers:

It's not Victorian. Brunel did not build it. It's driven by an electric motor the water-powered one is at Lynton and Lynmouth. It's not an atmospheric railway but we do try to create a friendly atmosphere!

Request on destination.

No, it does not go along the coastline, just down to Oddicombe beach! Telephone requests for information as if were a mainline connecting station on journeys to Teignmouth, Exmouth and even a call about Paddington!

Finally, staff grumbles: only half hour for lunch.

**Anon.**

### FBCR Committee

Chairperson-John Ayres  
jayres@blueyonder.co.uk  
Secretary-Arthur Christian  
fbcsecretary@hotmail.co.uk  
Treasurer-Kerry Gillon  
Draw Promoter-Jill Gillon  
Events-Adele & Gayle Farrell

FBCR Website/Cliff Railway Times-John Lawrence  
jml@friendsofbabbacombecliff railway.  
jmlcliff railwaytimes@hotmail.co.uk

Janet Dann, Derek Latham, Charles Blake, Bill Becher, Lindsay Yellands, Paul Hammond, Les Jennings, Richard House.

## Diary

**2006**

**Friday 17th November. 7.30 pm**

Winter Party and Fun Auction Trecarn Hotel Babbacombe.

**2007**

**Tuesday 6th March.** Annual General Meeting

**Saturday 7th April.** 81st Anniversary Event

**Wednesday 20th June.** Babbacombe Fayre-(FBC Promote fund raise/new members.

**The Following Awaiting Details and/or Confirmation .**

**December 2nd.** Torquay Winter Carnival  
FBC Promote fund new members.

**January.** Inception of Babbacombe Cliff Railway Community Interest Company (CIC)

**Tuesday 20th February.** Publish newsletter/AGM notice

**Saturday 31 March.** Dog Day on Oddicombe Beach-Possible seasonal opening of BCR?

**Saturday 16 to Sunday 24 June.** Babbacombe Festival-Education tours etc

**Tuesday 14 August.** FBCR BBQ Oddicombe beach

Why not write an article for publication in Cliff Railway Times and/or FBCR website send copy to:

jmlcliff railwaytimes@hotmail.co.uk  
Or  
jml@friendsofbabbacombecliff railway.org.uk