

Dreamland

MARGATE



DREAMLAND TEAM NEWSLETTER June 2010: Issue 4

Round and Round

By Bob Preedy

Look up www.richardswheel.com and see what the new Margate Wheel will look like. The grand Corbiere Wheel made its way from Blackpool, via four lorries, and was duly delivered to Maidenhead on Tuesday 15th June. It took twelve hours to load up and seven to unload.

The wheel is unique in that it offers a spherical ride in both horizontal and vertical planes. To touch the bottom rail which carries the 50,000 Kgs was rather exciting for an amusement park anorak like myself. To turn this huge device in the vertical mode requires a power consumption of 11kw, while the base power of 3kw turns the wheel at a maximum of 3rpm. Truly a monster device.

Back to the unloading. By 9am the first lorry load had been unpacked. This contained the inner spokes and the axle. The passenger carriages arrived on lorry number 2 and these were found to be in reasonable condition, but the wooden parasols were mostly rotten and will eventually be replaced probably by fibreglass. At midday the third set arrived and brought the remainder of the 14 carriages, most of the inner spokes and all the electrical controllers. Finally at around 2pm the fourth lorry was here containing the base, its motor, the solid rolling wheels and rail.

The wheel will take a few months to examine and then refurbishment will take place swiftly after this. What was fascinating about the day was observing the traditional work people. You could sense the lifetime of experiences that they'll apply to the project and we expect a first class outcome when the wheel finally arrives in Margate and starts to turn.

All the technical matters and the wheel's full history can be seen on Richard Ryan's website as above. Plus you can enjoy numerous colourful pictures of the ride in operation and under construction during its entertaining history.

90 Years and beyond...

By Jan Leandro

I know I don't need to tell you that the Scenic Railway is 90 years old this month supporters and friends raised their glasses to say happy birthday across the water from the Harbour Arm on the 3rd July. Many happy returns!

Bob Preedy and I attended the Big Event in June along with Kapo and the Dreamland Ice Cream Cart. The weather was appalling, but the company appealing. The event was an opportunity for us to bring visitors up to date with the project both in person and live on KM FM radio. Our thanks go to the Margate Visitor Centre for sharing their marquee and display area, which was much appreciated when the rain came down!

The BBC has twice visited the Dreamland site this month. Bob Preedy and Nick Dermott were interviewed by Ben Fogle presenter of BBC1's Country Tracks, broadcast date to be confirmed. Then later in the month Jonathan Bryant was interviewed for BBC2's Working Lunch show to be broadcast on Monday 5th July.

Also coming up is TDC's 2030 Vision Day at the Thanet Gateway in Cecil Square on 23 July, an opportunity for us to talk about the new Dreamland and the opportunities it has to offer the local community as part of Thanet's vision of the future. More information via http://www.thanet.gov.uk/council_democracy/thanet_vision.aspx.

By the end of July, we should be ready to launch the project website. The website will feature a Dreamland Time Line giving a snapshot of each decade from 1920 onwards along with progress up dates and images from the site when construction begins at the end of the year. Will keep you posted when we go live.

Good News

By Jonathan Bryant

Much publicity has been given to the new government's budget, tightening fiscal policies and all these will mean for our economy in the short and medium terms. How might these affect the Dreamland project and Dreamland Trust's work towards the 2010 re-opening?

Well, good news. Heritage Lottery Fund's commitment remains as strong as ever. Its development grant is funding final design work and it is ready and eager to receive Dreamland Trust's second stage application later this year. Thanet District Council's commitment also remains strong and it putting very considerable effort behind arrangements to ensure that future ownership of the site is right for Dreamland's revival and provides for an early start to work on site. In fact essential site surveys are already well underway.

The Department for Culture, Media & Sport's Sea Change programme support is also in place - it has committed no less than ?3.8m to the project. Revised government targets are not expected to impact adversely on Dreamland but to guard against any percentage reductions that may prove necessary Dreamland Trust is exploring other sources of funds that could support Dreamland's regeneration and education potential particularly.

As to what a tight economy will mean for Dreamland's future operations the consensus view is very encouraging. There will be less money about so people will be looking for quality destinations and experiences that are closer to home and cheaper to get to. Dreamland's classic formula will make it a very attractive proposition in this changing market.

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