

Cribbins 'cut short' by Princess at investiture

By John-Paul Ford Rojas

BERNARD CRIBBINS described how he was cut short yesterday by the Princess Royal as they were having "a nice little chat" after he received his OBE.

The 82-year-old actor said he and the Princess were talking during the investiture event at Windsor Castle when she suddenly brought the conversation to an end.

"It was lovely, we had a wee chat, we were rambling on and then she said 'we mustn't gossip' and sort of looked at her watch and that was it," he said.

Cribbins said he and the Princess had been talking about their shared interest in providing boats suitable for disabled people.

The actor is patron of the Wheelyboat Trust which works to encourage access for disa-



Bernard Cribbins is awarded his OBE by the Princess Royal

bled people on lakes, rivers and canals.

The Princess is patron of the Royal Yachting Association's Sailability scheme, which supports thousands of disabled sailors.

Cribbins was receiving his honour yesterday for services

to drama. His long career has included providing the voices of Uncle Bulgaria, Tobermory and Orinoco in *The Wombles*, which he described as "a very nice episode in my career". "I enjoyed it enormously, it was great fun."

Cribbins also appeared in several *Carry On* films and had a scene-stealing turn as Mr Hutchinson, the fastidious spoon salesman, in an episode of *Fawlty Towers*. Such has been his longevity that he featured in both the Doctor Who film *Daleks' Invasion Earth: 2150AD* in 1966 and the revived Doctor Who television series in 2005.

He is arguably best known for his role as Mr Perks in *The Railway Children*. Cribbins said he had no intention of retiring, and said: "If you know of any work that's going I'll take it. I love it, I can't stop, why should I?"