



# APPLE EXPRESS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF

THE APPLE EXPRESS STEAM ASSOCIATION PORT  
ELIZABETH - SOUTH AFRICA

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[www.apple-express.co.za](http://www.apple-express.co.za)

**November 2004**

## **THE VANDALISM AND STEALING MONSTER RETURNS**

After a period of quietness, theft and vandalism has once again returned to the Steam Depot

For two weeks in a row, secured and bolted iron gates were broken open and iron, copper piping, clothing and other valuable items were stolen from their storage areas. It seems that as soon as there is less movement around the Depot, thieves take it as an open invitation to make their move.

Some new copper steam piping was recovered from a local scrap dealer but unfortunately it had already been cut up into small pieces. When confronted by the Apple Express staff and the police, the scrap dealer still had the affront to bemoan the fact that he had paid a considerable amount of money for the copper and that he was the loser. Scrap dealers have not been very co-operative when approached about possible stolen metal being in their yards and on most occasions just point to a huge pile of scrap with words to the effect:- "Search the pile yourself."



Recovered stolen copper steam piping

In the latest incident, the staff restroom was broken into and overalls, boots, copper water piping, eating utensils and food were taken. An attempt was also made to remove the hot water geysers from the ceiling of the restroom. The staff arrived on the Monday morning to

find their rooms soaked with water.

A shipping container has now been placed at the depot to store all movable equipment and metal. So the battle continues in an effort to outwit the criminals.

It is interesting to note that the only building that has not been targeted by thieves is the station office. This is the only building which has insurance cover.

## **STATION AREA CLEANUP**



Lesley Lowe and Barbara Burton discussing progress at the station cleanup.

Recently AE Association members got together to tidy up the Humewood Road Station area. The garden was starting to get a bit overgrown and the big palm tree was looking a bit shabby. On the Saturday morning, about ten members and friends turned up armed with all sorts of garden tools and plenty of enthusiasm. It was a nice sunny day and everyone was soon sweating freely in the sun. By early afternoon most of the work had been completed and all the bush cuttings were piled in an area which was earmarked for removal by the municipality. A barbeque fire was lit between the rails and the hot coals were soon covered with enough food to fill everyone's stomachs that were by that time grumbling for energy restoration.



Barbara Burton, Sandra Strang and John Peace sweeping up the last few leaves.

During September the station buildings have also had a face lift having been painted inside and outside. Everything is now looking nice and neat and clean.

## **TRAIN SCHEDULE**

Provisional dates for train trips are:-

13 November

27 November

11 December

12 December

16 December – Public holiday

18 December

19 December

22 December

29 December

31 December

08 January

09 January

It is very likely that more trains will be scheduled during December but will depend on demand.

## **RECENT TRAIN TRIPS**

Because I was in England riding on some of their heritage lines, I unfortunately missed the annual Great Train Race event. From reports received, the race was once again a resounding success and, for a change, the train won the race by a short few minutes. It sounds like all those who were lucky enough to be on the train had a great and exciting time.

Unfortunately trains scheduled over the weeks following the GTR were not as well supported, with one trip having to be cancelled because of too few bookings. This past Saturday's train had about an 80% passenger loading. The train stopped at the Chelsea quarry, which has filled with water, so that staff from the local tourism office could inspect the area.

There have been some corporate proposals to develop this "lake" into a water sport attraction. If this development were to take place, two or three train trips a day would be possible. Hopefully this would encourage more families to ride the train at what would probably be a

reduced cost.

## **CONDOLENCES**

It is with sadness that we announce the recent death of the wife of our steam fitter, Sidney Terblanche. Sidney's wife and son were involved in a car accident with his son sustaining serious injuries. Thankfully he is on the mend. Our deepest sympathy goes to Sidney and his family.

**Clive Fife**

**Hon. Secretary/Treasurer**

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