The Locomotive

The class NG15 2-8-2 locomotives were originally built for the 2ft gauge lines in South West Africa (now Namibia) hence their nickname of "Kalaharis". A total of 21 locomotives were built between 1931 and 1958. When these lines were converted to 3'6" gauge in 1961 the NG15s were transferred to Port Elizabeth.

Our locomotive, no:17 actually hauled the last train on the Otavi branch with sister loco no: 119 before it was regauged. No: 119 still exists, although out of use, in the Humewood Diesel Depot.

No: 17 was built by Henschel in Germany in 1931 as the first of the class and worked on the Otavi branch. Transferred to Port Elizabeth in 1961, it remained in service until the mid 80s when it was withdrawn from service with boiler problems. As the first in class it was earmarked for preservation and moved to Springs loco depot where it languished for many years, quietly disappearing into the undergrowth.

The locomotive was rescued by Sandstone Heritage Trust in the late 90s and taken to their restoration workshop at Bloemfontein where it was restored to working order by Lukas Nel and his team. On completion of the rebuild the loco was moved to the 2ft gauge Sandstone Steam Railroad in the Eastern Free State. Here it has been the star attraction at many Open Days for local and overseas rail enthusiasts. No: 17 will be moved by road from the Eastern Free State to Port Elizabeth especially for this tour.



An NG15 Kalahari steams through the Langkloop

The Line

With a length of 285 kilometres, this is the longest 2ft narrow gauge railway in the world. Constructed between 1899 and 1906, the line was built to connect the scenic Langkloof with its fruit growing industry to the port at Port Elizabeth.



Traffic was general freight, fruit in season and passengers. Scheduled passenger trains were discontinued in the 1940s although some limited passenger accommodation was offered on freight workings until the mid 1970s.

Known as The Adventure Line, it is also home to the highest narrow gauge railway bridge in the world at Van Staden's Gorge at 77 metres. The line is best known for its tourist train, the Apple Express, which has operated since 1965 between Port Elizabeth and Loerie, but more recently to Thornhill or Van Staden's.

The Adventure Line also hosts the annual Great Train Race where runners compete against the train from Humewood to Loerie. Although the Apple Express is traditionally steam hauled, scheduled haulage of freight has been principally by diesel locomotives since the mid 70s.

As a line scheduled as "low density" by Spoornet, it has always had the threat of closure hanging over it. This tour, The Avontuur Adventurer, is part of a process to secure the line for years to come as both a tourist attraction and economically



Gliding through the countrysid

The Avontuur Adventurer

Port Elizabeth to Avontuur September 6th to 9th 2005



An exclusive "Tour de force" on the world's longest 2ft narrow gauge railway in the Southern Cape of South Africa. Enjoy four days of steam haulage behind historic NG15 "Kalahari" no 17. Ride the entire 285 kilometres of line from the seaside terminus at Humewood Road in Port Elizabeth to the terminus in the remote village of Avontuur plus the 29 kilometre branch to Patensie.





The Tour Organisers

The tour is being organised and managed by the Port Elizabeth Apple Express in a joint venture with Sandstone Heritage Trust. Port Elizabeth Apple Express is a licensed rail operator to Spoornet, operating the well known Apple Express tourist train. Sandstone Heritage Trust is a privately funded rail preservation organisation that operates a private 2ft narrow gauge railway in the Eastern Free State.

At its Eastern Free State base a large number of working examples of 2ft gauge locomotives and rolling stock operate on a 14 kilometre line at special Open Days throughout the year. It has a twinning arrangement with the world famous Welsh Highland Railway (Caernafon) and is recognised as one of the premier 2ft narrow gauge preservation centres in the world.

Tour Pricing

GB£ 1000.00 incl. per person sharing twin accomoda-

GB£ 200.00 incl. Single person supplement.

Your tour price includes:

- Train travel on all four days
- Photographic runpasts
- Accomodation for five nights, bed & breakfast, four evening meals and four lunches, including some en-route provided by the local community.
- Road transport from your accommodation to the train
- The services of a coach parallel to the train for photographers
- Transfers to George on 9 September
- Meals as described in the programme, including some

Your tour price excludes:

- Travel to Port Elizabeth before the tour
- Travel from George after the tour
- Items of a personal nature
- Insurance (It is strongly reccommended that you take out cancellation and travel insurance).



The Avontuur Station building

The Tour

The six day Avontuur Adventurer tour will include a four day journey over the longest 2 foot gauge line in the world, covering track that has not seen a passenger train for many years.

Day one - September 5th -

Arrive in Port Elizabeth and check into your bed & breakfast accommodation. Pre-Tour evening function

Day two - September 6th -

Today our train will run from Port Elizabeth to Chelsea. The journey totals 42 kilometres and should take about 56 minutes each way. The locomotive will be Class NG15 No. 17. Afternoon game drive & dinner at the game reserve. Overnight in Port Elizabeth

Day three - September 7th -

NG15 No. 17 will take us as far as Patensie, a 110 km run that should take a little over 5 hours running time, with an additional 2hrs 30 minutes allocated for servicing. The coach will run adjacent to the train for additional photographic opportunities. Luggage will remain on the coach and will be delivered to your overnight accommodation in Patensie. Evening dinner with the local community.

Day four - September 8th -

Patensie to Assegaaibos. No. 17 will take us on this 112km, 5hr 25 minute journey. An extra 2 hrs 30 minutes have been allowed for servicing. Overnight in Assegaaibos and dinner with the local community.

Day five - September 9th -

The last part of our journey will be from Assegaaibos to Avontuur, a distance of 120kms that will take 5hrs 20mins to complete, along with service stops. On arrival at Avontuur, travel by road over the Outeniqua Pass to George, where you will spend the night.

Day six - September 10th -

Your tour ends this morning after breakfast.

Whilst in George, you could consider visiting the Outeniqua Railway Museum and travelling on the Outeniqua "Tjoe-Choo" and Montague Powervan.

Pre-Tour option:

If adequate interest is received, a pre-tour option will be offered that will travel by road from Johannesburg to Sandstone for a two day steaming on the 14 kilometre estate railway line. This will be followed by visits to Port Shepstone for a journey on the Banana Express, and a visit to Paton Country Railway between Ixopo and Madonela.

Sandstone Estates has a large collection of steam locomotives and other industrial artefacts. The Banana Express should be operated by an NGG16 Garratt and Paton by an NGG11 Garratt.

Prices and agenda for the pre-tour option will be available once the organisers have an indication of interest.

Registration Form The Avontuur Adventurer

Name:		
Title:		
Address:		
City:	Country:	Code:
Phone: ()		
Fax: ()		
E-mail:		
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Knysna	Humansdorp	PORT ELIZABETH
¥	SO km	

Contact Details & Tour Bookings:

UK Enquiries: Geoff Cooke's Trains & Treasures 81 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool, SY21 7BA, Powys, Wales. Phone & Fax +44 (0) 1938 556198. E Mail: geofftrains@aol.com www. geoffs-trains.com

South African Enquiries: Andy van Rensburg

Sandstone Heritage Trust PO Box 67805 Bryanston 2021 Phone: 011 799 7400 Fax: 011 706 3633 E Mail: andyb@rfgroup.co.za

Terms & Conditions
- The tour will be confirmed once 35 bookings have been received.

A maximum of 50 bookings will be accepted.
 The organisers reserve the right to cancel the tour for whatever reason, and will not be responsible for any costs beyond the full refund of any deposits or final pay-

By their nature, the operation of steam locomotives on little used railways can present difficulties, and for this reason, the programme detailed herein is subject to

- A deposit of £100.00 to confirm your place. Final payment will be required on or before 60 days prior to the start date of the tour.
 - If you book less than 60 days before the start date of the tour, full payment will be

equired to confirm your place.