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Welcome to our March Newsletter

SIA is now over four months old. Steam enthusiasts and supporters of South Africa's rail preservation programme are joining in large numbers from around the world. In fact we are delighted with the fact that every day more than a dozen people sign up. Our ultimate target is 1,000 signed up SIA supporters which we believe will give us the necessary depth to continue our work and to demonstrate to the authorities that there is real interest in the objectives of SIA.

In this March newsletter we have launched our appeal. We have held extensive discussions with other preservation groups, particularly in the UK, due to their huge experience in raising money for the restoration of locomotives, the building of lines etc. We find that most of these organisations levy a membership fee for their members but we are not adopting that approach. We believe that by being specific as to what we are trying to do and by sharing with our members the cost implications we will create a situation where certain members would like to support certain specific projects. After all there are Narrow Gauge enthusiasts, people who are fond of a particular locomotive or those who have a strong geographic affinity to one or other railway destination in South Africa. We hope that by laying our cards on the table we will encourage members to step forward and advise that they are keen to assist.

Presently SIA is funded by contributions from the founders and from their association with commercial enterprises who support preservation as a worthwhile social upliftment exercise. For example, the Sandstone Heritage Trust which is well known, is funded by Sandstone Estates (Pty) Ltd, the agricultural enterprise on whose farm the railway is located. Sandstone therefore has its own engine generating the financial wherewithal to support preservation. This does not mean that more could not be done if greater resources were available but it does mean that the Sandstone operation, which is run like a business, is relatively secure. Where assistance is required is at the volunteer and club level. We have some outstanding and highly committed groups of steam preservationists who give of their time and of their money tirelessly. Examples are Reefsteamers, who have grown from strength to strength in Germiston, the recently revitalised Steamnet 2000 group in Beaconsfield who are working hard to bring a 25NC into operation, and Friends of the Rail in Pretoria who are a small but highly dedicated and focussed group of people who have achieved consistently good results over the years. These volunteer groups are able to expand and grow as funds become available. Assist the group of your choice if you can in any way possible.

Dave Richardson.

Specific Steam Locomotive Acquisition Programme Now Underway!

We have commenced with an acquisition programme for locomotives whereby SIA in conjunction with the Heritage Rail Association of Southern Africa (HRASA), WILL coordinate the acquisition of locomotives (either lease lend from Transnet or outright purchase) and then assist in moving them to the safest possible location.

Funds are therefore needed to buy locomotives, which are currently coming on the market quite rapidly due to a general shake-up in the way in which people view locomotives, i.e. many of the people that own them, such as municipalities, are keen to get rid of them, while at the same time there is renewed interest in their acquisition resulting from SIA's motivational programme to support clubs etc.

The second phase of the funds utilisation programme involves the specific restoration of locomotives. The North British Locomotive Society, for example, is working with Umgeni Steam Railway to have a locomotive repaired for export. While supporting the export of locomotives is not an objective of Steam in Action we are working with people like the North British Locomotive Society to ensure that redundant and derelict locomotives which meet their specifications are in fact isolated for export rather than being cut up for scrap. Our only criterion would be to ensure that there is an equivalent or identical working unit available in South Africa. In fact, our whole acquisition plan is very motivated by this type of consideration.

Your comments, queries and suggestions are always welcome!

Please email:
joannewest@btinternet.com

Steam in Action - An Association
 Incorporated under Section 21
 Registration Number 2007/035119/08
www.steam-in-action.com

Since SIA commenced there have been some interesting developments with regard to international enthusiasts committing themselves to the acquisition of locomotives with a view to keeping them in South Africa, and in fact even restoring them to working order. A good example is the purchase of NGG16, No. 116 by John Middleton and his partners. This locomotive has been acquired from a private owner who offered them for sale on the export market. However an ideal situation has developed where an international buyer has acquired the locomotive with a view to seeing it operate in South Africa on the Narrow Gauge. In this case rather than make a donation to SIA the enthusiasts purchased the locomotive themselves, which is an excellent way of achieving the objective. In fact there are so many locomotives that need to be saved that we believe that the quickest way to secure a safe future for South Africa's key locomotives is for them to be purchased by individual owners. SIA will assist with the logistics involved.

Remember we have real local knowledge and experience.

Letters from our Members

MEMBERS IN ACTION!

Following on from Peter Harding's letter in our February newsletter requesting information on the corrections to Frank Holland's books, SIA member, Dennis Edgar was quick off the mark to provide Peter with the info he needed. SIA members in action!

"Dear Dave,

Many thanks for the answers provided to the Narrow gauge locos at Sandstone and would you please pass my sincere thanks to Dennis Edgar for a copy of the corrections to Frank Hollands books on South African Steam Locos.

Regards
Pete"

OZ REQUEST

SIA received this email from Glenn Harris in South Australia:

"My name is Glenn Harris, I am the Locomotive Superintendent of the Pichi Richi Railway, which is a tourist railway based in Quorn, South Australia. I have recently received from Vesco Plastics a brochure regarding your use of their product in your operations. I would appreciate further information from you especially regarding in what applications you are using the product and what lubrication / maintenance is required. A local fitter has used vesconite in the past and has informed me that the material is damaged by the use of lubrication. Do you still lubricate the bearings? Our operations are basically in an arid (8 inch rainfall) area where there is extensive damage from grit, our locomotives range in age from 57 to over 130 years old and any solution which eases the ongoing workload, especially considering that the operation is entirely run by volunteers, will be appreciated.

In addition, I have been approached by a locomotive manager from a kindred society regarding sourcing 1 7/8" boiler tube. Are supplies of this size tube available in South Africa? Typical railway practice has resulted in the odd size the fact that we can no longer source that size tube in Australia, which will prove to be an ongoing problem to us in the future.

I am actively trying to open lines of communication between the various societies and would greatly appreciate it if you can include me in your information network, I can include you in our regular locomotive department newsletters should you be interested.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future."

Websites Around the World

Sandstone Heritage Trust has a number of O&K locomotives and during some internet research we came across this site as detailed in Martin Murray's letter below, take a look, it is very interesting. Martin admits he needs to update it and judging from his words, Steam in Action may be the catalyst.

Dear SIA,

Many thanks for your e-mail. The best web address for the list is <http://www.arleyhall.com>, though it is actually hosted at www.chm.bristol.ac.uk/org/murray/OKPRES5/HTM

Glad you enjoyed it, but please note that it is woefully out of date; the last amendments were made in 2001! I have much more information to add, hopefully your e-mail will be just the one to provide the incentive to update it.

I am therefore aware of the wonderful work Sandstone has been doing in maintaining so much important railway heritage. Geoff Pethick has kept me well informed of Sandstone's important work, so I think my records of O&K locos at Sandstone "should" be reasonably up to date. It would nonetheless be most appreciated if I could get an updated list to check with my records.

In 2000 I managed to make a brief visit to Sandstone, though not on a working day. At that time the locos from Angola (Tentativa sugar) had of course not arrived, and neither had the locos from Sena Sugar in Mozambique.

Maybe I'll be able to get there again soon. Part of my reason for interest in the Sena Sugar locos is the fact that I live in Bristol, so products of Peckett and Avonside have an interest for me rivalling that of those of O&K.

As I write this I am in fact in Brazil, so do not have full access to all my records. Please remind me of this correspondence in two weeks time, when I shall be back in Bristol, and in a better position to reply fully."

UPDATE ON THE RESTORATION OF 15F NO 3117

The restoration of Class 15F no:3117 continues at Friends of the Rail. Here are some updates on the work from the weekend of February 23/24 from Nathan Berelowitz.



Work on the tender of 3117 class 15F is nearing completion. John Dadford on the right gets assistance from "Spikkels" during a welding manoeuvre during the hot summer days of February 2008. If one looks closely, one can see the modifications that have been carried out on the coal space.



Soon to be united. The view from the tender of 15F 3117 sees some of the modifications that have been done. In the cab, Steve Smith and Miemie are busy with new floor boarding.



Inside the tender, are a number of Baffle plates that are fitted to control the forward and rearward movement of the water during the locomotive movements. Here we see the access door to the depths of the tender. The hinges have unfortunately rusted and will need to be replaced. At the time the photo was taken, it was stinking hot in here!



When water is taken from a water column, the overflow on the ledge of the tender, would drain out to the ground via two drain holes. Here we see the drain pipes from inside the tender itself. This particular pipe, was blocked and rotten, and will shortly be replaced. This will go a long way towards keeping the Fireman's feet dry!



15F 3117, is certainly looking more like it means business. Compared to a year ago, the cab has gone from zero to this. Well done to Robert and John for all the hard work.



The floor boarding has had to be redone on the 15F. The previous attempt of bituminous treatment, led to the wood warping and hence the new look. Steve Smith and Miemie, were hard at work with the fitting. The viewpoint is from the Firemans side looking downwards. You will observe the pegs for the drop grate handle used to operate the grates. This locomotive is not fortunate in having steam shaker grates.



A few weeks ago, there was a huge pile of confusion in here. Now we have a sense of order. The firegrates have been fitted and coupled up inside 3117's firebox. The dropprate needs fitting as well as the dummy grates at the front end. Soon a lively fire will be dancing on these floors!



Yes!! Nearly there. 3117 in all her glory. Painted and waiting the last few fittings before the flame of life is ignited within her!

Steam power at its best!

HOW TO IDENTIFY LOCOMOTIVES ...

As many years have passed since some preserved locos saw actual service there are often debates as to their true identity and some locos cause more confusion than others. Rail author and Historian, Dr. John Middleton, now resident in the USA sent us some short notes on Garratt identification plus some detail on the remaining locos at ACR in Port Shepstone.

"In SAR days, components were completely interchanged on all locos as they went through workshops for overhaul, in general the only thing that identifies a loco is its main frame so it does all get a bit academic as to "true identity".

With Garratts it's even more complicated as engine units also got exchanged from time to time.

Now on SAR, the main centre unit frame was typically what identified a loco (although I had an interesting debate with Lukas about this and even that may have varied between workshops) but in Zimbabwe it was the engine units

Very confusing !

So, you can have a loco which strictly speaking should be identified by its centre unit frame but in reality has more components from other locos.

Umgeni Steam Railway's GMAM "4074" is a perfect case in point, in industrial service its main frame got damaged and was replaced by a spare frame that came from 4126 which had been scrapped. The loco's engine units and many other components came from 4074 and this is the number that Umgeni identify it as, but in SAR days it would probably have been 4126.

As for the ACR narrow gauge locos, components did get exchanged but Peter Bagshawe has details of which locos carried incorrect numberplates (not really renumberings - more a case of variety by putting on a different numberplate. Preserved lines in the UK do this all the time to recreate "long-lost" locos. I am aware that 127 carried both 88 and 140 plates for a while at different times. However, the locos remaining at PS are 127, 139, 151 and 156 (plus derelict 141) - they can be identified from their boiler numbers and the boiler registration books show the correct identities. If Sandstone has the SAR boiler books for 155 it should provide the loco's history. Our 116 has the boiler from an NGG13 - No. 59."

UPDATE ON THE RESTORATION OF CLASS NGG16 NO: 116 IN IXOPO

As we mentioned in January's newsletter, Class NGG16 No: 116 has been moved from Paddock to Ixopo for restoration. John Middleton sent us an update.

"On 116 they have been stripping off components for cleaning and overhaul and as the tubes all seem to be in good condition they will go ahead with a hydraulic test, for which they have been blanking off the boiler. PCR successfully used heat and bio diesel to extract the rusted studs which apparently came out quite easily without having to drill and tap and replacement studs are being made. Next step is to strip the cladding, chip away and wire brush the rust and paint the boiler with NS4. The key missing parts were lubricator, injector, clack box valve, whistle, safety valves, chimney and ejector.

A replacement chimney has been found and fitted (although the petticoat was damaged with a section of casting broken out of it but they have been able to weld a piece on) and we now have a Detroit lubricator.

They have also cleaned up and serviced the water tender pivot and replaced the one on the loco. We also have the number plates and Beyer Peacock workplates.

Here's a recent photo taken three weeks after arrival with new chimney (they can move it under cover as restoration progresses (the building in the background which has I think 3 or 4 tracks)."



THE GREAT UNDERWATER LOCO MYSTERY ...

Around the world there are many tales of locomotives that have been lost only to be discovered years later and in some cases recovered. The most famous is the story of the SS Cairngorm which was sunk in the Red Sea in 1941 by the Germans. It was carrying, amongst other things, a number of ex LMS 8F locomotives which still survive on the sea bed today.

Here in South Africa John Middleton has opened a mystery of two Natal cane railway locomotives. In John's words,

"We know that two steam locos were pulled out of the Umfolosi River in 1980 (legend has it that they were buried in the 1925 flood) - one of these was definitely in the area in the mid 1980's but I have tried to find this on two occasions without success and we think it may have been moved from its first storage location and may have been scrapped (a pity after the effort of extracting it). The other loco has never been reported after the initial find. Below are some photos of the remains - basically just boiler, frame and wheels. Identifying the locos has proven difficult, Hunslet records show that their engine 1032 of 1914 an 0-4-2T with 8.25 " x 12" cylinders was built as St Lucia Sugar Co No. 2 (a photo of Hunslet No.3, a slightly larger 0-4-2ST Hunslet 1190 of 1915 is also attached). No. 3 survived many years and was given a new Hunslet boiler in 1947. Hunslet records are annotated that No. 2 was lost in the 1925 flood.

One photo shows what may be Hunslet 1032 after being dug up with another loco behind which for some years was thought to be Hunslet 1032 but now looks as if it is something else, yet to be identified. This second loco is the one that when first dug up was stored by a Mr A.B. Wessells at the "Zulutrac" Garage in Umfolosi Village. Local enthusiasts Huw Williams (now in the UK) and Robin Lake photographed the remains on separate occasions in the 1980's.



Mr Wessels also traded as "Mtubatuba Radiators", in March 1993 I spoke to him and he told me the remains still existed and belonged to Don Preen in Umfolosi Village (ie on the old national road south of the Umfolosi River). Huw Williams provided directions and he confirmed that the entrance bore a nameboard "J&D Preen" and led to the yard of Zulutracs where the remains were stored. I went to this property in June 1994 but could not find the loco (Mr Preen wasn't there and there was no-one else who knew anything about the loco).

Later, I then tried calling the Zulutracs Garage and they told me that although the loco had been there it had been sold for scrap to Tyger Tyrone in Kwabononbe. I could never track down this person or establish direct contact with Don Preen.

There exists another photo of a loco hit by the 1925 floods at Umfolosi which has not been identified but has some design similarities with other Hunslet's built at this time, specifically rather distinctive ribbed tops to the steam chests.

We know what St Lucia Nos 2 and 3 were, but St Lucia No. 1 has never been identified. The possibilities about No. 1 are convoluted, the St Lucia Sugar Co was incorporated by an E.W.F Maxwell in 1913 and an Orenstein & Koppel 0-6-0T (6955 of 1914) was ordered by them. However, two different stories exist of what happened next, firstly that the German equipment was never delivered because of WW1 and second that "tramway plant and engines" for St Lucia sank on the SS Centurion en route to SA. Is it possible that the second loco (the "Preen" loco) is in fact St Lucia No.1, if so it looks much more British than Germanic.

When the Umfolosi came down in flood it was ferocious and the SAR bridge was also washed away in the 1925 flood and one of the box girder spans ended up in the mouth of the estuary, several miles downstream, so any loco remains could be miles away under metres of sand.

Mysteries such as this are just great and there is nice bit of detective work here for someone and a challenge (locos pulled out of rivers in New Zealand have been restored !)"

This is certainly a fascinating mystery (or two). Do any SIA members have any further information or would like to play Sherlock Holmes in KwaZulu Natal?



Courtesy of Robin Lake, a 2nd loco dug up in 1980



UCOSP Germanic Loco



Courtesy of Robin Lake, UCOSP Hunslet Loco

Media Coverage

STEAM IN ACTION PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

To further increase Steam in Action's penetration into the world, a promotional video is in production with Frameline Productions. This company, run by husband and wife team of Ron and Val Nell, is well known in the documentary and corporate video arena. Rail enthusiasts will particularly remember "Steam Fever", probably the finest film made on South African steam.

The video is in the final stages of production but a short clip has been placed on YouTube and the SIA website. To access it on the SIA site click on <http://www.steam-in-action.com/videoclip.html> or you can go to YouTube and access it via the search facility by using the keywords, "Steam in Action" Although only a snippet it shows the quality of the production.

The final cut will be completed soon. All SIA members will be able to obtain a copy for a small donation.

SA Members: R50-00. Please contact Babita on 011 805 4692 or e-mail babitan@sandstone.co.za for banking details.

Non SA member GBP3-50. Please contact Joanne West on joannewest@btinternet.com - payment can be made by Postal Order.

Your copy will be posted to you on receipt of payment.

Special Announcement !

STEAM IN ACTION IS NOW ABLE TO RECEIVE DONATIONS

In our newsletters and in the Manifesto we advised that as the initiative developed Steam in Action would embark on raising funds for the refurbishment of specific locomotives that are of interest to the preservation community both in South Africa and Internationally.

Steam in Action which is a registered Section 21 Company is now in a position to receive donations.

One of the requirements for a Section 21 company is to appoint auditors. This has been done and those people and organisations who wish to donate funds to Steam in Action can do so knowing that the funds will be accounted for in line with internationally accepted accounting practices by the appointed auditors.

The South African Rand is very favourably positioned at the moment for people who wish to contribute Euros or Pounds in particular and even a small amount of Euros and Pounds will go a long way. For example 25 Pounds will keep an unemployed person in work for a week doing hard manual work on a loco. Rest assured they value the opportunity to earn the money and the queues are long.

A copy of the letter from the auditors is included for further information.

The bank account details are:

Account Name: Steam in Action
Bank: First National Bank
South Africa
Account Number: 62173787543
Branch Code: 261550
Swift Code: FIRNZAJJ

Michael Myers of SIA will administer the funds on a daily basis and can be contacted on mikem@sandstone.co.za should you have any questions.

We encourage you to visit our website and complete the donation form online, or print it out, fill it in and fax it back to us. Let us know your views, and details, and of course how much you would like to contribute.

How do you go about this? There are many ways of transferring funds but telegraphic transfer (EFT) is generally the least expensive method, just check with your bank if necessary, especially members outside of South Africa.

Steam in Action is about to enter the real action phase but we cannot do it without funding.

Let's go for it!

We look forward to hearing from you!

Click here to complete our Donation Form or visit www.steam-in-action.com

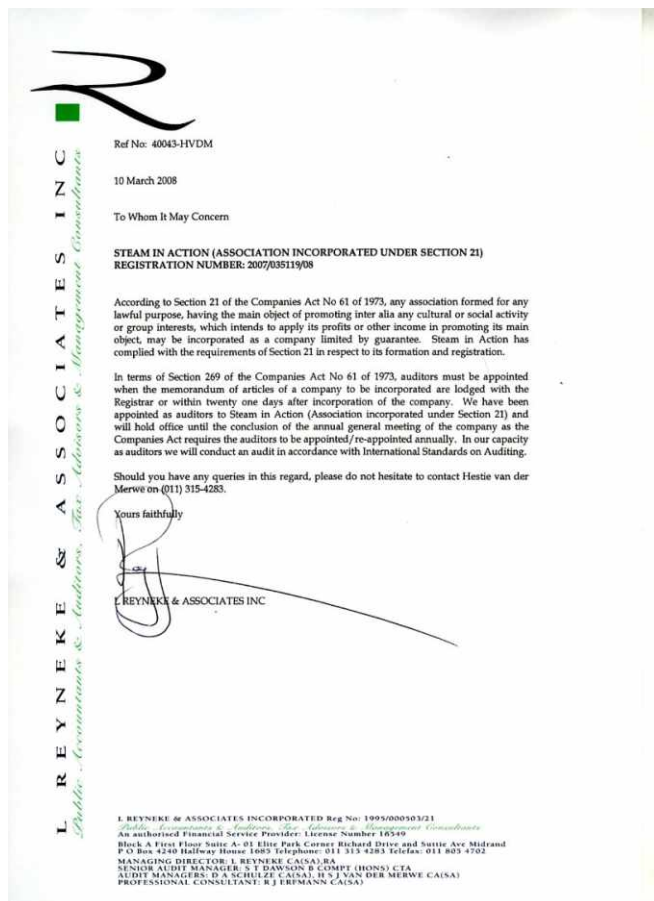
What are our Suggested Projects?

Following on from the opening of our fund raising we thought it was worth sharing again with you what we believe at SIA to be the definitive list of locomotives that can benefit from future funding. From many submissions the following was compiled by Dick Manton and John Middleton (as viewed previously in our January 2008 Newsletter):

Compiled from recommendations from Dick Manton, John Middleton and others, the summary below is probably as close as we are going to get to a definitive list of locomotives to be saved:

Following comments from John Middleton and Mark Robinson and others on my previous list of locos which I feel SIA should focus on, I thought you may find it useful to provide an updated list for input to SIA (and HRASA) future planning. I am now referring to this list as 'Red Line' locomotives as they are the ones which in my view must be saved from the scrapmen.

Whilst I am not suggesting that other locos should not be saved, I believe the figure of 450+ locos currently in existence in South Africa is not really relevant as it includes much duplication and there will never be the money to secure and restore more than a fraction of these even cosmetically. There is a real danger that if we try and save too many locos we will dilute the finance and manpower to maintain the current operating fleet let alone add to it with some of the locos from this list which we would all like to see.



I did a quick calculation and optimistically I don't see South Africa (adding all the current and planned steam operations and the residual George operation together) being able to maintain a 'core' fleet of more than around 25 - 30 3' 6" gauge locos in active service at any one time (which is a similar number to the currently active UK mainline steam fleet).

Funds to restore some of the interesting historic locos on the list and those currently with clubs, but which are perhaps less suited to the clubs regular trains, will I think have to come for external funding and volunteer support groups and here I believe SIA could help to galvanise support.

The locos on the Red Line list below fall logically into two groupings:

- Unique locos which must be saved (in many cases for static restoration) as they represent a key part of the development of steam traction in South Africa,
- Largely complete mainline locomotives at Bloemfontein, Beaconsfield, Voorbaai, George and Cape Town which have all worked relatively recently (within the last 5-6 years) which should be saved and hopefully restored to running order in due course. Some of these are also unique, e.g. Classes 15A, 15E, 16D, 16DA, 16E, 19B, 19C, 23, 25, 26, GEA, GO, GF. All would be useful engines for clubs to use on their regular trains and longer distance tours.

Finally clubs, private owners, tourist railways and others are encouraged to save what takes their fancy. However very special locomotives should be earmarked for restoration rather than left to decay. Many units have been saved but sadly are nowhere near being out of danger.

As before the list excludes all those locos currently in the care of clubs and on static exhibition at George which are presumed safe.

MILLSITE (Where many really unique locos are currently, but mostly stripped and in poor condition)

4AR 1555
5B 723
5R 781
6A 462 (has original tender)
10C 772 or 776 (choose best loco probably 772?)
12A 2111
15A 1791 (Already requested by FOTR)
16R 794
19 1366 (first of a long line of loco development)
GCA 2199
GE 2260

Of these the 5B, 5R, 12A, and 15A are absolute historic gems representing key stages in South African loco development which should be protected at all costs.

Where to put these locos where they will be secure and accessible to the public post THF is the question. Perhaps the North West Transport Museum in Klerksdorp could provide undercover accommodation in the short term at least?

The GCA and GE should logically go to Masons Mill in Pietermaritzburg if they were to be restored but transport and restoration costs may be prohibitive.

WITBANK (where there are a number of historic locomotives which came from Dunns loco works when it closed. They are stored in the open at the loco shed but mostly stripped and in poor condition)

G 221 (or industrial G depending upon condition)

I have not included the GM Garratt as suggested by John Middleton as GM 2301 is already saved at SANRASM. I believe that it is in better condition than either of those at Witbank or Millsite and transport and restoration costs would be huge for a loco of little practical use for normal club trains.

BLOEMFONTEIN (where there are a number of largely complete mainline locos which could be made serviceable without too much effort and cost)

15AR 1850 (already requested by Reefsteamers)
15E 2878
15F 3040
16DA 876 (already requested by Reefsteamers)
16E 857
23 3300
25NC 3410
25NC 3454

15AR 1850



25NC 3454



16E 857



All photographs
courtesy of
Dave Richardson

I would also add to the list at least one of the 11th Class locos at Bloemfontein which were acquired from active service on the gold mines (926 and 932)

I would suggest that all of the above locos ultimately be placed in the care of Reefsteamers as they are the only existing club with the ability to operate these large mainline locos. One option, if a lease can be established on suitable premises, would be to establish a restoration and running shed outstation of Reefsteamers in Bloemfontein (perhaps run by Lukas?). This would enable locos to be rotated periodically with Germiston and used for both local trips and long distance tours in the Freestate.

BEACONSFIELD (where two important, largely complete, locos have recently been placed in the care of Steamnet 2000)

16E 858
25C 3511

I don't know what the long term future is for Beaconsfield as a loco restoration site and running depot, but restoration of the 25 Condenser, one of South Africa's most modern, famous and notable locos, unique in the world as well as South Africa, must be a longer term objective for SIA.

ASHTON MAIN STREET (currently plinthed and reputedly in the best condition of the remaining 14CRB's)

14CRB 2010

VOORBAAI AND GEORGE MUSEUM (where a question mark hangs over both the future of the loco depot and the existing George - Mossel Bay operation post THF)

19B 1412
19C 2439
GEA 4023
GF 2401 (already requested by Ingwe Municipality)
GMA 4070 (Oil Burner)
GMA 4122
GMA 4128
GO 2575

All of these locos are largely complete and most have operated within the last 5-6 years. They are unlikely to be needed for any residual operation at George where 19D's are sufficient for the regular trains.

Some of the Garratts currently reside in George museum, but I would propose they be replaced by non-working locos. The Garratts could then be put to much better use in Natal if money can be found for their transport and restoration to working order.

GO 2575



GMA 4122



19B 1412



GF 2401



19C 2439



All photographs courtesy of
Dave Richardson

CAPE TOWN (where the remaining complete near serviceable locos from Dal Josafat are staged)

16D 860
16DA 879
15A 1970
15F 3153
15F 2916 (Oil Burner)
25NC 3422
26 3450



26 3450



16D 860



16DA 879



25NC 3422

All photographs courtesy of Dave Richardson

The first 4 locos are within the CWRMT compound at Epping whilst the latter 3 locos are stored in the Atlantic Rail area of Cape Town station. All have worked within the last 5-6 years and could be made serviceable without too much trouble.

These locos are safe for the time being, although it is difficult to see a future for them unless a major operator of tourist trains in the Cape emerges who could use these locos, together with some of those at George.

There are also a number of heritage diesel and electric locos which could well, apart from their historic interest, provide part of the answer to the haulage problem of ecs/ferry moves over core routes on long distance tours and in the peak fire season. There may well be a case for assistance from SIA for clubs to acquire diesel (classes 31/32/33) and/or electric (classes 3E/4E/5E) locos on purchase or lease.



15F 3153



15A 1970

Of course there are still many other locomotives, primarily industrial, that SIA is investigating for preservation and we will keep you posted on these.

As is mentioned in the list above we cannot bring every loco we would like to see back to the main line but we still need to secure them. So we would like to gather input from all SIA members as to what they think. We now have more than double the membership we had when the list was first published, so we can have a lot more input.

It goes without saying that we cannot do it without funds!

HRASA News

UPCOMING NEWS ...

Please watch out for this NEW regular feature from HRASA, starting in next month's edition of Keeping Tracks!

Blasts from the Past

Sena Sugar Estates in Mozambique had a massive 2ft gauge rail network on both sides of the Zambesi river mouth. They used a variety of engines including WW1 ex German Army "Kriegslok" locos. Here are nos 19 & 6 at work on the southern estate at Marromeu in June 1975. Photos courtesy of Geoff Cooke.



Upcoming Events



steam in action

The Free State Explorer

To coincide with the Sandstone Heritage Trust's *Steam and Cosmos Festival* from 9th to 13th April 2008, Steam in Action will be running a special train from Johannesburg to Ficksburg (and return). This train is primarily for SIA members to attend the event, but will be open to the public as well.

We plan to double head the train with Class 15F No. 3052 'Avril' owned by world renowned wild life artist, conservationist and steam enthusiast, David Shepherd, and matching Class 15F No. 3016 'Gardie' from Reefsteamers.

SIA members are encouraged to be 'hands on' during this trip as, during the stop-over at Ficksburg, the locomotive(s) will be used to bring two Class 25NC locomotives from the Bethlehem Depot to Ficksburg. The two Class 25NC locomotives are under threat of being scrapped at Bethlehem and will be relocated to Sandstone's Ficksburg facility for safekeeping.

Accommodation is limited, so BOOK NOW!
For further information, please email joannewest@btinternet.com

Steam in Action - An Association Incorporated under Section 21 • Registration Number 2007/031916/08
www.steaminaction.co.za • Email: joannewest@btinternet.com

STEAM AND COSMOS FESTIVAL

Sandstone Heritage Trust is holding the Steam and Cosmos Festival from 9 to 13 April 2008 ... click on the flyer for more details.

THE FREE STATE EXPLORER

To coincide with the Sandstone Heritage Trust Steam and Cosmos Festival from 9 to 13 April 2008, Steam in Action will be running a special train from Johannesburg to Ficksburg for members to attend this event ... click on the flyer for more details.



STEAM & COSMOS festival
09 TO 13 APRIL 2008

Sandstone Estates in the Eastern Free State of South Africa operates one of the largest collections of Narrow Gauge locomotives in the world. By public request we from time to time open our railway to the public and this we will be doing between 9th and 13th April 2008.

Up to 10 different Narrow Gauge engines will be steamed throughout the Festival with visitors and enthusiasts being given an opportunity to familiarise themselves with not only the railway but all aspects of the Sandstone Heritage Trust preservation programme. Regular guided tours will be held of all items in our collection.

A special highlight will be the Reefsteamers steam hauled passenger train from Johannesburg which will provide an opportunity for visitors to see some of South Africa's biggest steam locomotives in operation on the Eastern Free State line.

For accommodation in the Eastern Free State refer to <http://www.sandstone-estates.com/heritage/Tourism/tam3/tam3.htm>

For further particulars contact Hester Papenfus on tel: +27 51 933 2235 or email Hester at hesterp@sandstone.co.za

BOOK NOW!

STOP THE PRESS !

THE FREE STATE EXPLORER

After some hard negotiations between SIA, Reefsteamers and Transnet, Steam in Action has facilitated a much reduced fare for The Free State Explorer train from Johannesburg to Ficksburg on the 9th April. In addition a further discount on the fare has been negotiated for SIA members emphasizing Steam in Action's commitment to steam tourism in South Africa.

The revised fares are:

Adults: R2800-00 per person. Children under 12 accompanied by an adult are R1200-00 per person.
SIA Members: R2200-00 per person. Children under 12 accompanied by an adult are R950-00 per person.

The trip details and timing remain unchanged but certain meals and bedding will now be at an additional charge.

For SIA members who wish to travel through to Bethlehem on Friday 11th April and return by vintage bus to assist with the recovery of the two Class 25NC locomotives from Bethlehem to Ficksburg the fare remains unchanged at R200-00 per person, payable on the day.

All passengers who have booked at the previous fare will be refunded accordingly.

For bookings contact Les Smith on e-mail: bookings@reefsteamers.co.za or telephone 011 956 6409 or fax Les at 086 502 7780.

Club News

RSSA NEWS

The Railway Society of Southern Africa (RSSA) Reef Branch is the oldest rail enthusiasts club in Gauteng and it has just made a magnanimous gesture towards a number of Clubs in the region. Have a look, truly "Steam in Action".

"From the Editor ...

Put your money where your mouth is", well that's what the RSSA Reef Branch has just done. Way back in the past, when it was possible, the RSSA ran various big rail tours and when this ceased, some of the profit was left behind in the Reef Branch coffers. Due the careful husbandry of our treasurer, Jean Dulez, this money has grown to a substantial amount, and with the general run down of RSSA membership there seemed little prospect of this being used for the benefit of the RSSA members.

At last year's AGM, a motion was passed to distribute a portion of branch funds to the local preservation groups in order to support and enable them to continue their wonderful locomotive restoration work. So, over the weekend of the 16th and 17th February, a cheque for R10,000 was given to Reefsteamers to be put towards the overhaul of yet another-out-of service locomotive. A cheque for R 10,000 was also presented to Friends of the Rail towards the restoration fund for their 15CA, No 2850. Finally, a cheque for R5,000 was handed to SANRASM, to be allocated towards to cosmetic restoration of the Kitson (a declared national monument) and the Hunslet engines at the Krugersdorp site (these locomotives are in a much run down appearance at present, with various parts having been thieved a few years back).

Your editor is very pleased that these donations have now been finalised; RSSA members, rest assured, the Reef Branch still retains sufficient funds to carry on with its normal operations."



Cheque Presentation to
Friends of the Rail

REEFSTEAMERS AND EKHURULENI MUNICIPALITY ACTION!

Reefsteamers member and fireman Johann Breydenbach took the initiative to talk to Ekurhuleni Municipality, which includes the Germiston base of Reefsteamers, about their involvement in rail tourism with some good results. Johann writes:

"Through our church, I met one of the Council members who is involved with "ARTS & CULTURE". After a couple of meetings we sat down one day and started talking about our hobbies etc. He likes to paint and I mentioned my passion for steam trains. He seemed interested and I took him to the Reefsteamers' Germiston depot to view our pride and joy. He was so impressed that he organised a meeting for me with the chairperson of the "ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT" section of Ekurhuleni Municipality. I made such a good impression that she arranged for me to do a presentation for the Councillors who are sitting on the Economic Development committee (approx. 23 members). After the presentation, I left and they carried on to discuss the merits of our presentation. They expressed a desire to take this further and I was introduced to the Councillor for Tourism in Edenvale and the marketing officer.

We discussed Reefsteamers again and from this meeting the Councillor will take forward the following to the Mayoral Committee for their approval :

- 1) Ekurhuleni wants to be involved in our trains - only when we run in the Ekurhuleni district and not outside this boundary.
- 2) To sponsor a coach - paint their logo on the outside of the unit and entertain their people on board (details still to be finalised). We could receive an amount of about R100, 000.00 per year if this is approved.
- 3) Determine if it is feasible to run a train every month for their benefit to a destination of their choice - there again, this must be inside the boundaries of Ekurhuleni and not outside. The train will depart from Boksburg East station at say 9:00 - from 7:00 till 9:00 there will be dancers to entertain the passengers, maybe even a small informal market. The train then depart for Nigel. At this destination, buses will ferry them to Maryvale Bird sanctuary and we will wait at the station. The buses will bring them back and we will transport them back to Boksburg East.

Springs will be another route option as this lies in the "ART DECO ROUTE" as determined by the Council. From the station they can be transferred to "BLESBOKSPRUIT NATURE RESERVE" as this is part of the wetlands route.

Germiston Lake falls under this route as well as the Korsman's Bird Sanctuary and can be included as part of the tour.

I took two of the Committee members to the Steam loco to show them our toys. They were impressed and didn't realise that there are so many steam loco's still running in South Africa, never mind that they are in Ekurhuleni. We discussed our facility and they wanted to know if we can accommodate groups to view our facility and our rolling stock. Then somebody mentioned that we do have a balloon track and why don't we entertain the children with a trip, say twice around the balloon for a trip - small loco and one or two coaches - the Board of Reefsteamers will have to decide. They were thrilled to pieces and are serious to start ASAP.

They talked about helping us to revamp our dirt road and to put up proper signage for us to the loco depot. They are going to discuss all these suggestions and come back to me with an answer and maybe more questions.

We offered them a free train trip to Magaliesburg on the 15th of March 2008 which they accepted with open arms - a separate coach is allocated to them just behind the locomotive for privacy.

I will report back on this trip at a later stage and hopefully with some positive answers.

Let's steam ahead."

Steam in Action wishes Reefsteamers good luck and congratulates them on this initiative.

For the latest Depot News from Reefsteamers, click here ...

Some Titbits ...

STEAM IN INDIA

Until recently steam was an everyday occurrence in India but sadly now is mostly a memory. India had a large variety of gauges from 2ft to 5ft 3ins and the locomotives were highly decorated by their drivers.

Have a look at these images from Chris Webster at the variety of Indian motive power.



Visit our Founding Members

