



## 1). FROM THE EDITOR “

Two months ago Reefsteamers hosted a photo shot for FHM magazine. What follows was the write up that appeared in FHM Magazine

### Men of Steam and Steel, Locomoting since 1895

Deep among the weathered mine dumps of Jo'burg's industrial heartland lies a treasure of steel and steam. We were so impressed that a bunch of old steam trains could live on in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that we shot the FHM Collections "Summer Express" layout at the old Germiston Steam Locomotive Depot. Established in 1895, the depot, once the home to 340 steam locomotives has survived largely intact since it was officially closed to steam in 1992.

The men (and a few women) who operate these machines are members of the Reefsteamers, a non profit Section 21 company dedicated to the glory of steam trains. They donate their own unpaid time to maintaining and operating these proud survivors of our railway history.

*What a nice write up! We do have a wonderful asset in the depot and it shows how we can use the asset to raise funds for Reefsteamers – Ed.*



One of the new Working Platforms made by our employee Victor 1

## 2). LUNCH TIME! :

### Lunch time at Reefsteamers

*by the chef: Andre van Dyk*

There is nothing as satisfying as when hungry steam volunteers take a break for lunch time on a Saturday after a hard mornings work and gets presented with a plate of venison potjie (South African Stew).

Reefsteamers have over the years evolved from "moer by pot", directly translated to "add to the pot". This comes from early days on the railways where the train/footplate crew would work in one direction and book of at their destination. Everybody would then contribute a couple of food items such as meat and vegetables, then somebody would take ownership put everything together add the required spices and make some kind of stew with what was available.

When I started at Reefsteamers the guys were also cooking this "moer by pot" which was not too bad at first, but the more you have it the less you like it. Let me explain why; not everyone could contribute for various reasons, but the idea was that everyone would join for lunch to build some camaraderie. To solve the problem the cook would add everything to the pot and to have enough for everybody fill the pot with water, then to add to this concoction the cook would add some hot spicy stuff and the end result would be a pot full of spicy soup.



Being a Reefsteamers member, steam train preservation forms part of my life every Saturday and the occasional steam tours. Additionally, I also hunt plain game in the winter time especially when the trains don't run. With my extra hobby of hunting, I would have lots of game meat available and then on some Saturday's would make a pot with game meat, which proved to be quite popular amongst the Reefsteamers. Being costly, I could not do this every Saturday and then we would fall back to the usual weekend meals.

This process evolved and at first I manage to negotiate a monthly budget with Reefsteamers so that nobody needed to contribute food and also this served as a thanks from the Reefsteamers board to the members who were offering their time to work on Saturdays at the depot. Additionally because of the new arrangement, I would hunt extra game on my hunting trips specifically for Reefsteamers.

The preparation starts every Friday night; on my way home from work I buy the veggies at Woolworths, at home I will take the game meat from the freezer defrost it and put it in the pressure cooker for an hour. The Next day I will be at Reefsteamers depot before 08:00 to start the cooking process, I then dice and slice all the veggies and add to the pot along with the precooked meat. With the pot brewing for close to 2 hours I also make a pot of rice to go with it. Then as per the South African potjie you add all your magic sauces and spices at the end and slow cook for another 10 – 15 minutes and then you have a master piece that will not last long. The pot will then be left to slightly cool down and mature while I join the rest of the Reefsteamers volunteers on the assigned jobs for the day. About 12:00 we will round up all the members and anyone just visiting at the time from around the depot and we will have our lunch.

On occasional basis we have a chicken curry pot or a braai (barbeque), but about 90% of the time we have a pot of home cooked game potjie. If any of the less regular members or just visitors ever have the opportunity to get to Reefsteamers depot on a Saturday, please come and join us for a scrumptious lunch.

### **3). DEPOT LEASE :**

Reefsteamers was requested to submit a business plan to Transnet to justify the renewal of the lease to the Germiston Depot. This has been done and the depot lease has been renewed for the next 3 years. Our long term aim is to try for a 99 year lease on the property. Under the terms of the new lease, we can now legally fence off the balloon track – which will help with security and especially if the Millsite locomotive restoration project gets off the ground.

### **4). RETENTION OF TRANSNET PILOT :**

We were recently offered the option of running without a Pilot on our day trips. This would have resulted in a small cost saving on our YQ's as well as allowing an extra slot in the locomotive cab. (We are limited to four people per cab.) It would have reduced the risk of a delayed stop to pick up the pilot should they report late for duty.

However, it was decided to retain the services of a Transnet Pilot to assist is with the routes and the changing conditions on them. Although Reefsteamers is an operator, we do not receive notices of restrictions on the line. And should there be an accident or an incident, the Transnet Pilot will assist us by collaborating our actions. Lastly, the pilot will supply confirmation or instructions in the event of ambiguities signaling and dispatching.

### **5). TRAIN MANAGERS :**

Reefsteamers has approached four of our volunteers to undergo training as Train Managers. We currently only have two qualified and reliable train managers, being Attie de Necker and Clifford Matthee. It is a bit stressful for him but furthermore, as he approaches his mandatory retirement age after which he is no longer allowed to drive, he is losing driving opportunities by having to serve on the coaches.

We have been preparing a basic manual and the practical training is already underway. Soon you will see the Train Manager working with an assistant. The four Train Manager candidates are 'Wimpie' van Wyk, Harry Cubitt, Colin Hall, Dennis Edgar and Robbie Davies-Hannibal.

Guys, thanks for stepping up to the plate and taking on the responsibility.



**6). COACH STAFF ROSTERING :**

We are moving to a more formalized Coach Controller rostering system which identifies the candidates, similar to as the footplate and service crew rosters work. Up to now, we've sometimes had a roster and sometimes had a pitch up if you can type approach. I

It is important to roster the Coach Controllers for several reasons: strategic in terms of appointing Coach Assistants for training, booking them to specific coaches and quite importantly, assigning who is to serve as the fire fighting crew.

**7). DONATION BOXES :**

As you will read elsewhere in the newsletter, we are formalizing the process for application for sponsorship. A longer term project will be the fitting of robust money boxes at the end of each coach, asking for donations for specific projects. Each box will be accompanied by an A4 display board with photos of the project, the costs, as well as the funds already raised. We have a number of locomotives which need repairs but cannot progress due to lack of funds – although those jobs, in railway terms, aren't really all that major. The coaches and the depot facilities need work too.

**8). MODEL RAIL CONVENTION :**

Reefsteamers will be participating in the Model Rail Convention in Eden Vale on the 24 September. We are looking to advertise our presence. Various live steam locomotive models will be on static display as well as Reefsteamers media. Diana Sanderson and Leslie Smith are the contact people for this event and if you would assist in the logistics or manning of the stand, why not get in touch with them?

**9). ENGINEER'S REPORT – LOCOMOTIVES :**

Class 25NC No.3472 'Elize' has passed the hydraulic test and is currently on track for visual inspection. The worn petticoat and chimney have been removed. The petticoat is to be replaced with a spare while the worn sections of the chimney are being patched. (With material from the old petticoat – which is basically scrap.)

The large generator has been shifted into the S&B van where the tool racks used to be. Space has been released by removing the redundant radiator exhaust ducting for the existing Perkins engine, and the workbench placed there in its stead.

The larger capacity generator is required to supply electrical power to the electric geysers that are fitted to the sleeper coaches – the existing Perkins powered generator doesn't have the capacity. Mr. Perkins will be run for the day trips on the day sitter train, with the big generator as stand by in case Mr. Perkins breaks down. The big generator will be used on sleeper trains and long distance trips. If it breaks down, Mr. Perkins can be run to at least supply power for lighting and the water pumps, and the geysers will be switched off.

**10). ENGINEER'S REPORT – COACHES :**

There are two coaches outstanding for a refit.  
We will also need to service the 'Nigel' coach for use on the Geoff Cooke 2010 tour.

Sandstone's half-finished day-sitter waiting in the 15M workshop needs about R5000 for the painting work and about R5000 to install the plumbing. Elize Lubbe has authorized the release of the funds. We are looking for volunteers who are competent spray painters to assist us with the painting, and other volunteers to assist with the plumbing. Anyone out there interested in taking on the project?

We are investigating the possibility of converting the guard's compartment of one of the day sitter coaches into an access area for disabled people, including the fitting of a wide door to permit wheel chair boarding. This project will not happen until the Sandstone day sitter is back in service – so we can then pull one of the in-service coaches out and start the job



**11). CLASS 15F NUMBER 3046 :**

Our unfinished Class 15F. No. 3046, is underway for completion. This locomotive, as soon as we can get permission from England's Royal family, is to be called 'Elizabeth' to commemorate her hauling of HRM the Queen on board the royal train in 1936.

Piet Labuscagne, now retired, is working on the locomotive 6 days a week and spends the entire day on the project. He also has a full time assistant as Luca Lategan has been assigned to help with the restoration. The locomotive is essentially complete but lacks pipe work and boiler fittings. Parts are being sourced and other parts will be borrowed from Class 15F No.3016 'Gerda'. The concept of borrowing parts is distasteful – but 3016 won't be running for a while until we raise R85 000 for firebox repairs. Meanwhile, No.3046 could be running and earning revenue by the end of the year.

**12). CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER :**

A colleague of one of our members, when he read a copy of the Reefsteamers Waybill, complained when seeing Andrew King referred to as the 'Chief Mechanical Engineer.' His gripe was that we did not supply a certification number. In reality, the reference to 'Chief Mechanical Engineer' is a title usually given to the most senior mechanical person in a Steam Preservation group. It is not a formal qualification. No inferences are intended towards Andrew King's competencies – merely that he is the person ultimately in charge of the mechanical aspect of our organization. No serial or registration number is required and the use of the title will continue.

**13). ON-TRAIN SALES :**

We have recently purchased a stock of attractive calendars that commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Railways. They feature all kinds of traction, not just steam and were compiled by Chris Janisch and Nathan Berelowitz of the Friends of the Rail. The calendars are going to be sold on a trial basis on board the train by Coach Controller Jimmy Ross.

Depending on the response to sales of the calendars, we will look into formalizing the sale of souvenirs and novelty items on board our trains. There is a lien of embossed miniature locomotive number plates we'd like to try out. Our finances are tight though and further purchases have been suspended until we can get some money in.

**14). S&B VAN KITCHEN :**

The new kitchen for the S&B van is now complete except for the provision of cooking apparatus. The hot water piping has recently been connected. The adjoining crew wash room and shower is now in commission. Since the sleeper coaches were converted with most of them having the showers converted to en-suite facilities– we have had a problem with shower facilities for crew members as the showers have been closed off from the corridors.



New Crew Kitchen in the Reefsteamers Power Car.



**15). YEAR 2010 - LEAVE :**

Next year is going to be an action packed year. We will be running the Cherry Festival as well as our section of the Geoff Cooke Tour. In addition will be the day trip trains running every third day during the 2010 games. Sandstone Estates is also taking registrations for their planned Mega Power 2010 event – but this is a private event that is not mandatory for Reefsteamers. The problem is that there are more days required for events than most people receive for annual leave.

The board is to discuss this problem and to see what we can do. We are not unaware of the issue.

**16). COACH LIFTING PROJECT :**

On behalf of the Reefsteamers Board, I would like to thank all of those who participated in the recent Coach Lifting Project. This procedure was legally required to be able to renew the five-year general roadworthy certificate for the rail vehicles, including the water tanker that we regularly use on the Magaliesburg train trips.

For those that don't know this involved the systematic checking and servicing of the running gear, the draft gear, the brakes and the axle boxes of each coach. Each approximately 40 ton vehicle had to be jacked up alternatively at either end to check the pivots for the bogies.

We initially had a slow start, hence a few mild rebukes and pleas for members to please get involved – as this project was not optional. It was deemed not desirable to use the regular fitters and engineering people as they already had much work to do on the locomotives. However, the member turnout stabilized and the job was finished on time. It was noteworthy how much faster, efficient and more confident the coach servicing team became – learning new skills and putting them to use. Perhaps it wasn't a particularly exciting or glamorous project – but you'll be surprised how unexciting and tedious some of the locomotive work can be.

We aren't quite finished yet, as we still need to service three more sleepers, a water tanker and the coal grab wagon, before they can run on the Cherry Festival 2009 trip. Andrew King wants to see these get finished over the next month.

So, a big 'thank you' is due to all that joined us crazies grubbing around in the mud-flaked under-side of those coaches and well done too, for taking the effort to learn and use new skills, and thus helping the over-stretched engineering team by getting this vital project done.

*Lee Gates (On behalf of the Reefsteamers Board.)*

**17). LIBRARY REQUEST :**

I (Stewart Currie) wonder if anyone can help, I have come across a few issues of the old Reefsteamers' magazine "Stack Talk" Has anyone got a complete set that they can donate to our reference library as it documents an important part of Reefsteamers history.

**18). TRIPS :**

The Reefsteamers trip to Magaliesburg on the 5th September was a full trip and run with no problems.

Magaliesburg picnic ground Improvements. The following has been introduced.

- A jumping castle.
- A water slide.
- The pony man - provides the kids with pony rides around the picnic area. (For the passenger's own cost)
- There is also now a "Boere Mark" (Farmers Market) which can be found on the adjoining site on the western side of the picnic area.
- Plenty more tables & chairs.
- Braai fires already lit at the top portion of the site, as well as down by the river.



These are the scheduled trips till the end of October

- Saturday the 19th of September 2009. Reefsteamers' private charter for the Boksburg Correctional Services.
- Thursday the 24th of September. SANRASM trip.
- Saturday the 3rd of October 2009. Reefsteamers trip.
- Sunday the 4th of October 2009. Reefsteamers trip.
- Saturday the 10th of October 2009. Private charter for the West Rand Christian Care.
- Sunday the 11th of October 2009. Private charter for the Holy Rosary School.
- Sunday the 25th of October 2009. SANRASM trip. .

### **19). APPEAL FOR DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIP :**

Restoring our locomotives and operating our trains require a large number of consumable items. All these consumables cost a substantial amount of money; if we can get some of these items donated we will have more funds available for restoring our locomotives and expanding our operations.

Some of the items we are looking for:

- Paint
- Cleaning materials
- Hand cleaner, polishing rags and cotton waste
- Sand paper and grinding and cutting discs
- Grease and lubricants
- Plumbing fittings
- Steel and other metal materials
- Welding rods
- Hand tools
- Machine tools
- Electrical fittings
- Window glass & putty
- Boiler tubes
- Personal safety equipment

We have recently created a simple three step process for you to get an official Reefsteamers donation request letter for possible donations and sponsorship.

1. Contact our club secretary Lee Gates (email: [Clubsecretary@reefsteamers.co.za](mailto:Clubsecretary@reefsteamers.co.za) ) with the details of the opportunity such as what maybe donated, company, contact person etc.
2. Lee will create an official Reefsteamers donation request letter for the opportunity.
3. Submit the donation request letter to the company/person.

If you work for a company or have contacts at a company that may be able to donate some of these items please approach them on our behalf. Even if you have some surplus tools or material in your garage please consider a donation as every little bit helps.

*Aidan McCarthy*  
*Logistics Director Reefsteamers*

### **20). MEMBERSHIP :**

We have a bit of a problem on the membership side. A bundle of Reefsteamers Membership cards seem to have gone astray. These will typically be membership cards that were made in the first quarter of this year until we had the AGM in April and the new tired membership structure was introduced.



If you are a registered and paid member of Reefsteamers (except email members) , including those from overseas and distant towns, and you DON'T have a membership card as yet, please inform me and we can work on getting missing cards re-made. (And overdue new cards issued.)

With the gradual tightening of security, we will soon make it compulsory for members to display membership cards upon entry to the Members' Gate. (No.6) This rule is technically in force now but the regular security guards know the members' cars and often let you in by sight and sign-in alone.

However, the security staff are quite within their rights to ask you for a membership card at any time and they have the right to refuse entry to the Member's area should you not be able to display a card. They also have the right to escort you off from the premises in the evening \ night time should you not be properly signed in and cannot prove that you are a member.

Remember that as Reefsteamers Members, rudeness and racism towards the security guards while are doing their job, will not be tolerated by the Board. (We've had a few ugly incidents recently.)

If you don't have a Reefsteamers Membership Card for 2009 – get back to me ASAP by email or by SMS at 083 630-6618. NO voice calls please.

*Thanks,  
Lee D. Gates*

## **21). BITS & PIECES :**

Regarding the question about the derailment of Shongololo at Bela-Bela (Warm Baths).

The derailment occurred on Tuesday (11 August) night at the points on the southern end of Nylstroom station. Apparently the points did not close/open properly and the heavier electric units went one way and the coaches onto another line. According to the train manager passengers were in the dining car when one bogie went off the rails. Spoornet employees were called out, the coach jacked up and the wheels put back onto the rails. They were allowed to continue slowly towards Warm Baths where the train was due to be stabled for the night.



Broken Bogie from Shongololo Express

Yesterday morning it was decided that the derailed bogie needed some attention before they could continue. They 33 passengers were bussed to Hazyview, where a night at a hotel was part of the itinerary, before spending the next day (today) in the Kruger National Park.

I was contacted when they tried in vain to hire a suitable vehicle, to fetch spares and gas bottles in Pretoria, at a local AVIS outlet. My Condor was eventually used to take one of their workers to fetch the items at Rovos Rail in Pretoria. Apparently they were unable to help them and they went to Reefsteamers at Germiston. Last night the Condor returned without any spares or gas bottles (fortunately, I don't think a Condor was designed to carry a whole bogie!).



Spoornet supplied a new bogie and replaced the damaged one during the night.

When I phoned the train manager this morning the train was at Witbank and passengers will rejoin the train tonight at Hazyview.

*Boon Boonziaer*

*Editor's Note:-*

*The replacement bogie was supplied by Reefsteamers as it was an old type not currently used by Transnet.*

Regarding the special stamps for the 150th anniversary of the railways, the final designs in sheet form (10 stamps) plus the designs of the two first day covers (6E1 on one and Reefsteamers' 12AR 1535 on the other one) and it is arguably going to be the most beautiful railway stamps ever issued. The Post Office will publish the designs later, but I believe even non-collectors are going buy a sheet or two.

## **22). CONTACT DETAILS :**

This newsletter was compiled by Stewart Currie on behalf of Reefsteamers.

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Just to show the power of an Electric Locomotive where an uncontrolled wheel spin had melted a rail.