



steam in action



EDITION 17 KEEPING TRACKS APRIL 2009

Welcome to the April newsletter.

Membership total as at 28th April 2009: 775

Our controversial SIA newsletter for the month of March generated a prompt and substantial response on many issues. We ruffled a few feathers along the way and this has caused the Advisory Board to review our approach. This month's substantial newsletter will reflect a more moderate tone without us sacrificing the determination that exists to get certain things done.

One point that has been made is that the March SIA newsletter was too assertive and was likely to offend organisations such as SANRASM, HRASA, etc.

We have the following comments to make in this regard:

One should remember that SIA came into existence due to the failure by many organisations and by certain individuals who were unable to appreciate the value of South Africa's Railway Heritage. They were not apparently aware of the dereliction of their appointed duties in putting together strategies and resources which might preserve these assets for the enjoyment and edification of future generations.

Because so little was done, which resulted in the loss of the greater percentage of what Heritage items were available only 10-15 years ago, the concerned private sector stepped in and invested their own money and gave of their own time in order to try and hold the line.

These same private sector players, which involved Clubs and Rail Preservation Organizations, together with private collections, failed to gain any recognition from the authorities. These same private sector players were badly let down by the inscrutable incapacity of HRASA which was preoccupied with minor political differences rather than mediating with the Railways and putting together a workable strategy which dealt with a bigger picture. Happily, this issue has more or less now been resolved as a direct result of the same direct approach which SIA has always demonstrated and which was described in the March newsletter. In other words, there were people who were sufficiently concerned about the lack of progress to say 'enough is enough' – let's bypass HRASA and try and recoup some of the lost ground from the past and save what is left.

SIA's job is to assist people to achieve their objectives, i.e. to save locomotives or to keep them out of harm's way. There have been a number of cases where offers of assistance, finance, technical and logistical support have been ignored. For some reason certain preservationists made the decision to turn a blind eye to the fact that the assets under their control and in their trust are in the process of disintegrating. When that stage is reached we as an organisation definitely need to be very robust. A very good example is the NG15 locomotives which have been allowed to disintegrate at both Humewood Road and Port Shepstone. We have engaged the Transnet Heritage Foundation and the Apple Express for a number of years on this issue without success. In fact we are not sure how to move forward but we will not give up and a new set of initiatives needs to be implemented. If our original motivation fails, which it often does when dealing with civil servants and official bodies, then SIA needs to go around them in order to stay focused on the primary objective. This is of course to move the threatened and/or decaying Heritage assets to a place of safety where ultimately they may be cared for and hopefully restored and put back on the rails in all their original glory and charisma.

It is important to note however that we will always apply the politically correct, polite and non-confrontational route first through the correct official channels. We are not renegades and our members can be certain that before we adopt a more robust approach we have applied normal courteous negotiating strategies. The private sector preservationists in South Africa have done a tremendous amount to not only save certain assets but to try to save those that are threatened but it became very obvious that we were considered as largely irrelevant by the authorities in particular, notwithstanding the fact that they publicly encouraged private sector / public partnerships.

In this SIA newsletter (April), there is substantial praise for progress being made on various fronts. In contrast, there is also well deserved criticism for the terrible dereliction that is presently taking place, such as the situation described at Jan Kempdorp. One should remember that, official denials notwithstanding, the pattern has always been found to be the same by those active in Heritage Preservation, i.e. while government officials bicker amongst themselves or adopt a hostile approach to the private sector, the assets themselves suffer further degradation. The private sector must inevitably suffer acute frustration because in many cases, such as the NG15 'Kalahari's' dumped at Humewood Road, sufficient time goes by that eventually, even if the private sector is given the keys to the gate to move in and save those assets, there is nothing left to save.

Therefore, in summary, SIA could well adopt a non-confrontational 'wait-and-see' attitude and agree that hopefully people's consciences will motivate them without external prompting and challenges. However will the Heritage assets survive this period of wistful optimistic diplomatic transition?

If you are reading this newsletter and if you are responsible for Railway Heritage assets or if you can make a contribution to save them, then you need to do it now. Prompt, positive action is vital, even if you offend people, not only with entrenched personal interests, but sadly, entrenched organizational inertia as well. There is much more good news than bad news, at the moment, and this is a trend that we are confident will continue with assertive and possibly confrontational action and communication.

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Humewood Road



Humewood Road



Port Shepstone

Advisory Board Appointment

After a visit to the Sandstone Heritage Trust Maluti Magic event recently Deon Irish from Cape Town stepped forward and asked if he could contribute to SIA in a meaningful way. In line with our policy of broadening our base of expertise the Board agreed immediately. There are many legal issues to be considered as we move forward in the post HRASA era, particularly when it relates to lend/lease agreements etc.

A shortened version of Deon's CV is attached. [Click here to view PDF.](#)

Deon, welcome on board and we look forward to working with you.

SIA Advisory Board Forum

We appreciate that many of our members are busy but if they have any thoughts on the subject matter of our newsletters or on any of the business that SIA is involved in please communicate with us. We are a consensus organisation and we do attempt to reflect the thoughts and views of our members where possible. Although our Advisory Board has only been in place for just on 8-weeks we are working well together and are coming up with an innovative way in dealing with

members' correspondence and putting our thoughts together on issues of strategic importance. Here is a selection of Advisory Board contributions.

Comments on SIA strategic approach (see editorial in this edition):

"I discovered a phrase used by the Late Lord Dowding. He recognised "conscientious incompetence" and there is a lot of it about both here and I suspect in SA. The point in the editorial about moving on whilst others dither or prevaricate is well made. If it ruffles feathers so be it. As you rightly say all this obfuscation misses the key issue that the assets are deteriorating as time passes and the opportunities will be gone. That's when the fur really will fly if intransigence prevents the identification and safeguarding of valued and increasingly valuable assets. We had the same nonsense here. I think the phrase "Publish and be damned" should now be invoked."

Phil Mortimer (UK)

"It is important for members to note that the SIA newsletter is an open forum and that as such it allows members to express their views. It is not up to the editor to censor the input but to allow members to express themselves freely."

Everyone may not agree with what other members have to say but we hope that those who disagree with an issue being raised use the newsletter as a medium to debate these issues or to set the record straight if required in a mature professional manner."

It is far better to contribute in a positive manner than to stand on the side lines waiting for an opportunity to take a fellow member apart when he/she provides information which may be subject to correction. Why not simply point out the error and ask for the correction to be published."

In the editorial it is the editor's prerogative to raise issues that may be controversial but this is the nature of a democracy. South Africa has been in a position where freedom of speech was suppressed for too long and we should never be put in such a position again. This is not to say that we should not be irresponsible in what we report. If members disagree with an editorial then it is their right to respond, again in a mature and professional manner, and to ask that their views be published."

While the newsletter may sometimes deal with thorny issues the members should also note the SIA newsletters main objective is to report on what is happening, to promote preservation and to stimulate debate which is done in the interests saving South Africa's rail heritage."

Mike Myers

"I agree with Michael's views but would post a caution on his observations concerning censorship. We need to allow people to express themselves, even the anger, frustration and disgust – but a way must be found to get around personal insults that may be included. I do, however, believe the editorial staff should check the validity of facts presented though and if they cannot be confirmed by the time of publishing this should be noted in amongst the write up. We gain credibility by asking the SIA members at large to confirm facts – thus enhancing the degree of mobilization that we keep talking about."

In our efforts to be an open and democratic forum, we do not want to degenerate to the likes of the SAR-L forum. We do not want to expend efforts and brain-space publicly sorting out issues and possibly lose credibility when we end up looking like we've distracted from the agenda because of the public content of the newsletter."

We must accept that inevitably mistakes will be made and corrections or errata must be issued. Given the calibre of leadership of SIA, I have no doubt that this will be done in sincere and professional manner."

Lee Gates

"Perhaps this is the correct place to publish an apology and at the same time belated appreciation to Charlie Lewis, for his superb photos of the Class 25 condenser locomotives which were referred to in my covering note, and then included by mistake. Also that they were credited to Gary Barnes, who was probably not born when the photos were taken! If there were people who took issue about the accuracy of the captions, in Charlie's original covering note with the pictures, he said he was separated from his notes and was relying on his memory. I also omitted to credit him for the picture of Frieda, which he did give us permission to use. Thanks!"

Andy Selfe

"I guess that this communication thing is a bit like fishing: SIA needs to be action-oriented to keep the membership/general public 'on the hook', but not so aggressive that the line breaks and they get away."

I would suggest that the tone of public communications is monitored/filtered carefully to be

- Action-oriented but not overly aggressive
- Assertive but not rudely critical of individuals
- Factual as much as is reasonably possible
- Direct and to the point without waffle

I guess readers should be thinking "Thank goodness that this bunch is at least doing something", but not thinking "What a bunch of arrogant individuals!"

Errol Ashwell

"Revitalisation of SIA"

You recently asked for input re the revitalisation of SIA and mobilisation of its membership.

I have only been back in South Africa since late February but have already picked up a number of issues which I think are relevant to the SIA discussion and it may be worth summarising the background to where we are now before talking about a plan for SIA going forward. Please bear in mind that this has been put together very quickly based on my initial reactions to current rumours of what is happening on the ground.

1. The continued decline of the Rail Network in South Africa

It has been reported in the media that Transnet had to find R4.9billion out of their budget by the end of March. Reported TFR actions I have picked up so far which I assume result from this include:

- plans to stage 250 (?) diesel locos and several thousand wagons,
- Cancellation/Reduction in TFR staff overtime. Closure of the OFS lines and operating depts from Saturdays 14.00 - Sundays 22.00 apart from a few staff to support S/M trains after 14.00 on Sundays. I am sure this will lead to the loss of yet more traffic to the road transport operators as TFR effectively becomes a 5 day week freight railway. Presumably this also means a problem for any tour trains which operate after 14.00 on a Saturday,
- Rumours of yet more branch line closures and major loss of traffic to road.

2. Eventual closure of THF

It is reported that THF staff will be made redundant from the end of June when THF will be closed down. This is despite the Western Cape Government being in ongoing dialogue with Transnet regarding the future of the George - Mossel Bay tourist service, the George Museum and the future of the closed George - Knysna line. I understand the politicians are not happy with this and are trying to get an extension of the Mossel Bay service and the Museum. As a result of the uncertainty, THF are unable to take Tour Group bookings for the Mossel Bay service beyond the end of June.

Picking up all the threads from the above it would seem that Transnet are in some trouble financially and I doubt they will be very sympathetic to an SIA campaign for more Rail Tourism at the present time. Also I would imagine that the departure of Maria Ramos together with her Chief Operating Officer at the end of February and the reported disagreements over appointing a successor are likely to create a hiatus within the organisation for at least the next 3-6 months.

I would hope that the politicians will be more sympathetic but I am sure it will be difficult to get their attention until we get the new government ministers installed post 22nd April.

3. Way forward for SIA.

Given this background what should SIA be focussed on? In my view it should be the big issues where the large International membership should help to back up the likely political lobbying which will be needed for any success. I think we need a blueprint of what a world class Rail Tourism industry should look like in the South African context together with a plan of campaign for SIA to assist in realising the vision.

Given that we are talking about Rail Tourism I think the plan needs to include a number of major elements in the Cape which is where most tourists head first. It is almost criminal in my view that THF allowed the excellent rail tourism business which Ian Pretorius built up based on the Union Limited and 5 days Golden thread tours to wither and die.

So my initial thoughts on what is needed and their priorities are as follows:

(i) As a background to the projects below, there is a need for a project to convince local and national Government of the contribution which Rail Tourism can bring to the SA economy. This has been mentioned by Errol Ashwell and also in the discussions with David Morgan and others at the Sandstone Maluti weekend. Terms of reference have been drawn up by Dudley Smith for such a project and I believe this needs to be progressed urgently to set the other SIA work in context for government. I understand the Western Cape HRASA members have already done something along these lines for the Cape Western Tourism minister which was well received.

I am aware of much work being done in the UK and elsewhere in Europe to quantify these benefits in financial terms. e.g. work done last year by the North Yorkshire Moors Railway in the UK demonstrated that, in addition to the direct jobs created, the railway contributes around £18M per annum to the local economy indirectly in terms of tourist money spent in the area. David Morgan also mentioned the situation on the Severn Valley Railway when it was closed by flooding last year with local businesses reporting a major drop in business and in some cases going under.

(ii) Save George Museum - as the only public Rail Museum in the country, sited in a major tourist area and the start point for the Mossel Bay steam service. I think an owner has to be found for the museum where it will be nurtured going forward Whilst there have been some suggestions in the reviews of the Knysna line that the Museum could be moved to Sedgefield I really don't think this is practical from a space or cost point of view.

(iii) Save the George - Mossel Bay steam service (at least until a George/ Wilderness - Knysna alternative is up and running if not long term). If the existing service is allowed to close along with the infrastructure at Voorbaai it will be so much more difficult to restart later as staff skills will be lost and inevitably there will be theft and vandalism of the infrastructure.

(iv) Save Voorbaai depot as a steam repair facility and running shed. Whilst it has been suggested, under some scenarios for reopening part of the Knysna line, that a running shed be built at Sedgefield, I understand that the current consultants looking at this feel that Voorbaai should be retained as a major overhaul facility. It has a fully equipped workshop and extensive stocks of steam loco spares built up over time by THF. In addition to the Knysna and Mossel Bay operations, Voorbaai would be an ideal centre for an extended Cape Based steam tourist service operating to Cape Town and Oudsthoorn along the lines of the old THF Union Limited tours. Once Voorbaai is saved there may be a case for moving all the steam patterns used to manufacture parts from Bloemfontein workshops down to Voorbaai.

(v) Provide support to the relevant provincial authorities with the setting up of some form of public/private partnership to reinstate the Knysna - George line. Whilst the current work is focussing on only the Wilderness - Knysna section due partly to the high costs of reinstating the Wilderness - George section, I believe we should be more ambitious than this. The current plans exclude reopening the Kaaimans River Bridge which is probably the most iconic rail structure in the world (often used to sell holidays to South Africa world-wide even today when the line is closed!). They also preclude the possibility of long distance tours coming onto the branch from other parts of South Africa as they have always done prior to the washaways in 2006. The inclusion of Knysna as a destination for longer distance tours and a ride over the line provide the major highlight for tours and have the potential to bring many more tourists to Knysna for an overnight stay.

In terms of the SIA membership I believe that they will be able to relate well to points (ii) - (v) above probably more than any others we may champion as it is almost certainly the best experience they remember from previous South African visits.

(vi) Work towards a better access agreement for the existing clubs which allow them to extend the scope of their operations. Whilst there are clearly some lines where it is not practical to allow steam tour trains to run (the heavy haul lines, Durban - Jhb corridor, etc.) many of the so called core lines where steam is currently banned have very few trains per day and are in fact having signalling systems downgraded due to lack of traffic (e.g. Jhb - Bloemfontein). I believe that without an extended access agreement the future success of the existing Reefsteamers, FoTR and Umgeni operations will be threatened and future operators will be seriously impaired.

(vii) Following on from the above it follows that there is a need for a fully commercial long distance tour operator based in the Cape who will be resourced to run 5-7 day Golden Thread type tours along the Garden route (not necessarily all steam - diesel could be used for the overnight sections). This would also be a far better use for the Old Union Limited train set currently sitting at Voorbaai rather than as a day train on the Wilderness - Knysna section only as has been proposed in the Knysna study.

I would suggest this needs to be a fairly upmarket experience with side visits to Wine Farms, Cango Caves, etc. but probably marketed somewhat below the Rovos Rail top end market which is more limited. Starting from where we are now this will need a lot of capital and expertise to set up which appears thus far not to have been forthcoming within South Africa. However, I do believe there are operators in the UK and Europe who could well be interested in such an opportunity if Transnet can be brought to the table and the risks minimised.

(viii) Establish and maintain a list of the most important vintage steam locomotives (and vintage diesels and electrics) which have not already been saved and moved to a place of safety. My updated list of Red Line locos at Millsite and elsewhere could be the starting point for this although I am increasingly of the view that even this list is too long in terms of what can be practically saved, moved and secured. I believe that movement of the 10 critical locos I recently identified at Millsite with input from John Middleton should be the first stage in this using the money already donated to SIA.

(viii) Encourage relevant Provincial Authorities, Tourism and enthusiast bodies interested in taking over closed branch lines to run tourist services. The purchasing/leasing of closed lines is where it all started in the UK and whilst there is not the volunteer base in South Africa that there is in the UK I cannot believe there is not the potential for one or two preserved line independent operations (e.g. Paarl-Franshoek, George - Knysna, Hercules - Magaliesburg) if only Transnet can be persuaded to part with them!!

I realise this is a very long list of things for SIA to consider and I do not see at this time how it could all be resourced. However the priorities are starting to be driven by events on the ground now - hence the need to try and get agreement on the way ahead."

Dick Manton, UK

SIA COMMENT:

Dick, we did not know that SIA needed revitalisation.

Distribution of Membership List

The policy regarding the SIA membership list is that it is confidential. It can be accessed by the SIA Advisory Board members if required. However, at the recent high level meeting between Mike Myers, Errol Ashwell, Les Smith and Transnet, represented by Vuyo Kahla and Susie Mabie, they acknowledged the credibility and the effectiveness of SIA and have now made the decision to deal directly with SIA as and when this is appropriate.

They did ask for us to prove the veracity of our membership and we have therefore made the membership list available to them on a confidential basis without any contact information, i.e. name of member and country of origin. We believe the objective has been achieved and they now consider SIA to be highly credible.

SIA Interaction with Transnet

A meeting between Transnet and Steam in Action was held on 14 April to discuss a number of issues that have been raised by various members of SIA. In attendance was Mr. Vuyo Kahla the Group Executive of the Office of the Group Chief Executive and Ms. Susie Mabie the Acting Head of the Transnet Foundation and Errol Ashwell, Les Smith and Mike Myers on behalf of SIA. The agenda included the following items.

1. Branch/disused lines

2. Steam Exit Plan. (Memorandum of Understanding)

- Core lines.
- Main lines.
- Branch lines.
- Running steam trains at night.
- Running of steam trains during the "Dry" months. (Winter season)

3. HRASA and Steam in Action

- How can SIA and its members assist Transnet?

4. Millsite.

- Assistance in moving the locomotives. (Financial or otherwise)
- The coal stage.
- Locomotives at Millsite not on the official HRASA list

5. Irreplaceable heritage items.

6. National Collection

7. Transnet Library

- What is the future of the Transnet Heritage Library books, art collection, photographs, paintings, maps and drawings?

The meeting was held in a cordial and co-operative manner. All of the items on the agenda require further discussion and clarification and both SIA and Transnet have agreed to continue to work through the agenda until consensus has been reached. Once this has been achieved SIA will be in a position to provide the members with meaningful feedback.

Mocambique

The excellent approach and the very constructive points which were expressed by CFM Mozambique in the correspondence we sent to members as a special bulletin in mid-April has borne fruit immediately.

We publish below the responses we have received so far. Some of these have gone directly to CFM as requested, and others have come to us and we are working with the parties to put together the right package that will be of most benefit to CFM.

Handled correctly this could be a model of public/private sector cooperation in saving an entire country's railway heritage.

"That's great news about Mozambique. I would certainly love to help out there in any way I can. If they can get some kind of operation running on the Xai-Xai line that would be excellent. But I think the real opportunity lies in running short excursions out of Maputo. After all, the shed and facilities are there, as well as a couple of locos, and CFM has the choice of four lines, including the very scenic route into Swaziland."

Paul Ash

"Dear Mr. Mesquita,

I understand from 'Steam in Action' that you are interested in seeing photographs of Moçambique locomotives from the steam era. I visited your country in 1972 as part of a South African tour and the photographs that I took are now on the Internet.

I still have lots of South African ones to upload, but all the Moçambique pictures are in the 'South Africa - Part 1' collection : <http://ronfisher.fotopic.net/c1132432.html>

They are about half-way down the page and the first one is reference: 1978/08/21.R3905.

I hope that these are of interest; I would be happy to supply you with original copies if you can make use of them.

You might also like to have a look at some similar pictures taken by Geoff Plumb who was also on that tour with me: <http://geoff-plumb.fotopic.net/c747602.html>"

Ron Fisher

"Greetings from Hillcrest KZN,

What a fantastic positive response from Mr Mesquita of CFM! Just imagine what 'we' could achieve if Transnet had some staff with his interest, attitude and drive!

Needless perhaps to say, I assume his appeal and responses will be shown to those previously 'uninterested' parties at Transnet. Especially those that have thus far ignored and not even had the common courtesy to reply to SIA (Tourist train) correspondence, proposals and suggestions!!

Keep up the splendid work!

Yours in Steam,"

Rupert Gray

"Dear Sir,

In response to your appeal to steam in action to send photographs of C.F.M. Steam locomotives; I am sending this shot of C.F.M. 700 CLASS 4-8-2 #706, hauling an Iron ore train from Ka Dake mine in N.W. Swaziland. These powerful locomotives were built by Montreal Locomotive Works; CANADA in 1948. They were similar to the South African Railways 15F but much better looking machines, partially I think because they didn't have smoke deflectors, also they had a lovely steamboat whistle; like a lot of the U.S. locomotives.

On my first visit in 1974 to Africa, from Australia, It was not safe for us to visit Mocambique, because of the civil war; so unfortunately, we only saw your lovely locos in Swaziland.

In 1977, on our second visit the 700s were looking neglected and by our trip in 1980 they had been replaced by the S.A.R. 15 AR 4-8-2 and the C.F.M. 400 CLASS 4-8-2[X Rhodesian 12B]

Will send more photos as I find them."

Dennis MITCHELL



"For some time I have been intrigued by Mozambique steam locomotives. Very American & love the central smoke box number plate. With the late Dusty Durrant I visited Maputo about 6 years back, & found 3 remaining Montreal built 700 class 4-8-2 (behind the large concrete roundhouse) which in my opinion were the most handsome 3'-6" gauge 4-8-2 ever built. One fascinating class in Mozambique was their Henschel built 2-10-2 which I note a few survive plus the remains of two 2-6-6-2 Mallets. Also 2 GMAM type garratts at Gondola, which I believe are still intact.

Attached is a slide show sent to me by Dylan (click here: <http://share.shutterstock.com/action/welcome?sid=8EaNHdJw4asKq>). It is too difficult for me to save one of the 2-10-2, but it is a most unusual wheel arrangement for 3'-6" gauge & I wondered if you would be interested in salvaging what appears to be a reasonably intact locomotive, complete with side & front number plates. Go to the link for the slide show illustrating the 2-10-2. What a coup it would be within the preservation movement to save one of these locomotives."

Ian Welch

"I saw the correspondence on Mozambique and thought I could offer a couple of suggestions. It's great that CFM are talking to SIA but the gems in Mozambique go well beyond Moatize. Attached is what I think is the current steam list:

PP-Plinthed D-Dumped S-Stored for Possible Preservation

As you can see there are some magnificent gems in here, the best of which is Atlantic 813 at Nampula. Several of the locos are in reasonable condition having worked into the 1990's or later (Quelimane had some steam working until about 2003 I think)

Gauge: 3'6"

1	0-6-0T	OK	6997	1914	PP	M - Maputo Yard Offices
1 (ex 71	0-6-0T	Hen	20244	1929	PP	N - Nampula Station
4	2-8-0	Hen	22423	1934	D	Q - Quelimane
5	2-8-0	Hen	23341	1937	D	Q - Quelimane
6	2-8-0	StLeonard	1949	1922	PP	I - Inhambane Station
7	2-8-0	StLeonard	1950	1922	D	I - Inhambane
8	2-8-0	StLeonard	1951	1922	D	I - Inhambane
9	4-6-0T	D	2760	1892	PP	M - Maputo Station
10	4-8-0	NBL	16086	1903	PP	B - Beira Docks
20	2-8-0	OK	12110	1930	D	I - Inhambane
67	0-10-0T	Hen	22381	1934	D	M - Maputo Shed
100	2-6-6-0	ALCO	50846	1912	D	B - Moatize
101	2-6-6-0	ALCO	50847	1912	D	B - Moatize
143	2-8-2	SACM	8093	1950	D	N - Nacala
14x	2-8-2	D				N - Nacala
14x	2-8-2	D				N - Nacala
253	2-10-2	Hen	29046	1955	D	B - Moatize
259	2-10-2	Hen	29052	1955	D	M - Goba (wrecked)
270	2-10-2	Hen	29063	1955	D	B - Moatize
332	4-6-2	Hen	29067	1955	S	M - Maputo Shed
406	4-8-2	BLW	73829	1948	D	Q - Quelimane
409	4-8-2	BLW	73832	1948	D	Q - Quelimane
412	4-8-2	BLW	73835	1948	D	Q - Quelimane
413	4-8-2	BLW	73836	1948	D	Q - Quelimane
453	4-8-2	MLW	75470	1947	D	B - Moatize
461	4-8-2	MLW	75478	1947	D	B - Mutarara
502	2-6-2	Hen	22782	1935	D	I - Inhambane
503	2-6-2	Hen	23992	1938	D	Q - Quelimane
571	2-6-2	Porter	7294	1941	D	I - Inhambane
572	2-6-2	Porter	7295	1941	D	I - Inhambane
813	4-4-2	Hen	19908	1923	D	N - Nampula
952	4-8-2+2-8-4	HSP	2060	1952	PP	B - Beira Works (supposedly operational)
959	4-8-2+2-8-4	HSP	2067	1952	D	B - Machipanda
971	4-8-2+2-8-4	Hen	28642	1956	S	M - Maputo Shed
972	4-8-2+2-8-4	Hen	28643	1956	D	B - Gondola
TZR G ?	2-8-2	D				B - Inhaminga
TZR G ?	2-8-2	D				B - Inhaminga
TZR G ?	2-8-2	D				B - Inhaminga
TZR G59	2-8-2	NBL	27781	1957	D	B - Moatize
TZR G60	2-8-2	NBL	27782	1957	D	B - Inhaminga

Note: The two 14x locos are from 141-148 (SACM 8091-95, 8152-54)
259 abandoned at Km 67 just east of Goba (Maputo-Goba line) after 1978 derailment

Gauge: 750 mm

1 GAZA	0-4-0T	Couillet	1216	1898	PP	M - Maputo Station
05	2-6-2	BLW	59204	1926	D	X - Xai Xai
06	2-8-0	BLW	58180	1925	D	X - Xai Xai
012	2-6-0	ALCO	61464	1919	D	X - Xai Xai
082	2-6-0	ALCO	56023	1916	D	M - Maputo Shed (Dismantled)
083	2-6-0	ALCO	56024	1916	D	X - Xai Xai"

John Middleton

Coincidentally at the time we were communicating with CFM António Teixeira e-mailed information on the status of the Moatize yard which contains the priceless Mallets. Antonio's comments are detailed below.

"Finally had some time to visit the Moatize Rail Yards, despite working and living here for some time now. I was afraid that things might be radically different in a few months as the Sena Line rehabilitation is approaching Moatize.

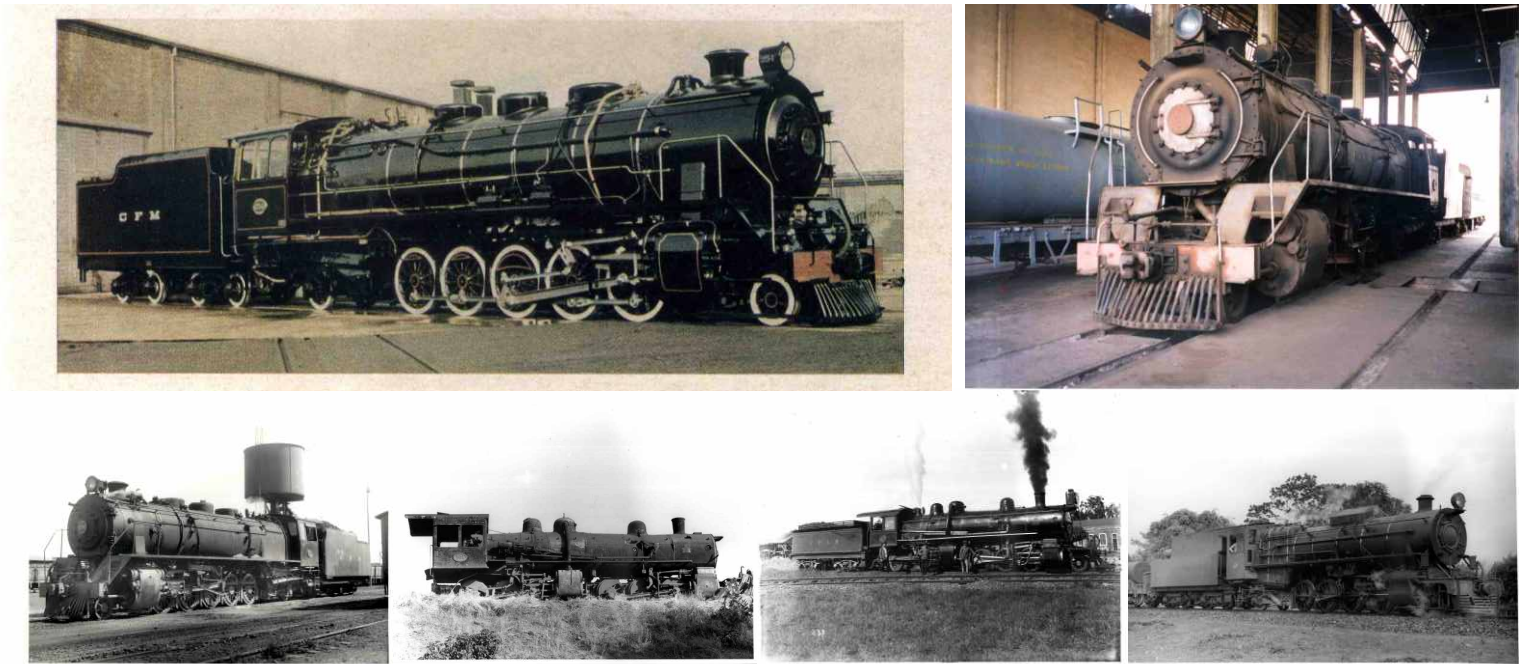
I discovered 6 locos in total, 4 of them in the yard and 2 outside in rather strange positions. Of the 4 in the yard, it seemed to me that 2 are still recoverable, and those are under a shed. Well, to see some pictures of the visit please click on the following link:
<http://share.shutterstock.com/action/welcome?sid=8EaNHdJw4asKq>"

António Teixeira, Moatize, Tete, Mozambique

“Hi Joanne,
 Here some pics including featuring the 2-10-2s stored under cover at Maotize, a works pic, a sample G class somewhere up there, the Mallets, as now dumped and a very rare archive pic (ex CFM) of one actually in service, taken way back in the 1930s!

The Mallets would be real challenge to retrieve since they have been pushed down the head shunt bank and will require a crane (50t?) to lift out! The Henschels could be towed out by rail eventually. The 'Gs' are trapped somewhere down the line in expectedly dreadful condition.

Regards
 Jean”



Update on Millsite

Millsite was an item on the agenda during the 14 April meeting with Transnet and it was decided that SIA would take stock of what is stored at Millsite. Steam in Action has also been receiving numerous requests from our members as to what steam locomotives are at Millsite. Most members are probably familiar with the locomotives listed by HRASA for eventual preservation, which are all secured in the "Compound area"; but what of the others?

Les Smith of Steam in Action went out to Millsite to seek answers to your questions. Here is what he came up with.

SCHEDULE OF STEAM LOCOMOTIVES CURRENTLY STORED AT MILLSITE AS AT FRIDAY THE 17TH OF APRIL 2009. LOCOMOTIVES CURRENTLY FOUND AT THE 15M SHOP AREA

LOCO NUMBER	TYPE	ON HRASA'S ORIGINAL LIST		ON DICK MANTON'S RED LINE LIST		REMARKS
		YES	NO	YES	NO	
2913	15F		X		X	THIS LOCOMOTIVE SHOULD BE ON BOTH LISTS AS IT WAS REBOILERED AS LATE AS 1978
2934	15F		X		X	MARKED R FOR RESERVED?
2919	15F		X		X	NO CAB – UNDER COVER. MARKED "DO NOT CUT RODS"
2041	15CA		X		X	FAIR CONDITION – UNDER COVER
DZ	GOODS WAGON	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	CONTAINS VAROUS SPARE DRIVING WHEELS.
2902	15F		X		X	BELONGS TO SANRASM
2929	15F		X		X	MARKED FOR SPARES

2048	15CA		X		X	MARKED DO NOT CUT RODS – SPARES
2525	15CA		X		X	MARKED DO NOT CUT - SPARES
2040	15CA	X			X	FAIR CONDITON
2077	15CA		X		X	FAIR CONDITION – MARKED WITH AN “S” FOR SCRAP
3098	15F		X		X	TENDER MARKED “TO SAFC?
2833	15CA	X			X	MARKED HRASA TO KEEP 23/06/2008
2908	15F		X		X	PARTIALLY UNDER COVER – MARKED “R” FOR RESERVED?
2111	12A	X		X		ON BOTH OF HRASA’S LISTS
2803	15CA		X		X	MARKED “S” FOR SCRAP
2853	15CA		X		X	MARKED “S” FOR SCRAP
2039	15CA	X			X	MARKED HRASA TO KEEP 23/06/2008
3075	15F		X		X	MARKED FOR REEFSTEAMERS
1488	3BR		X		X	PRIVATELY OWNED
1771	14CRB	X			X	MARKED HRASA KEEP 23/06/2008. TO BE NOTED IS THAT THIS LOCOMOTIVE BELONGS TO SANRAM
						LOCOS KEPT ON THE ASH PIT LINE/
2260	GE	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA’S LISTS.
2292	GM	X			X	MARKED KEEP HRASA 23/06/2008
776	10C		X		X	MARKED KEEP HRASA 23/06/08
						LOCOS KEPT IN THE COMPOUND AREA
2940	15F		X		X	MARKED KEEP FOR HRASA 23/06/08
3764	S2	X			X	MARKED KEEP HRASA 23/06/08 ALSO MARKED “FOTR”
685	19A	X			X	MARKED KEEP HRASA 23/6/08
3079	15F		X		X	FAIR CONDITION
840	16CR	X			X	HRASA 23/06/08
772	10C	X		X		ON BOTH OF HRASA’S LISTS.
1366	19	X		X		ON BOTH OF HRASA’S LISTS.
3645	24	X			X	HRASA KEEP JUNE 2008.
360	S		X		X	MARKED HRASA JUNE 2008 BUT NOT ON LIST. SHOULD BE COSMETICALLY RESTORED
1247	1	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008

794	16R	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008
3103	15F		X		X	GOOD CONDITION
2836	15CA		X		X	FAIR CONDITION
2820	15CA		X		X	MARKED HRASA 2008 – BUT NOT ON LIST.
3001	15F		X		X	GOOD CONDITION
50	STEAM CRANE	X			X	RESERVED FOR REEFSTEAMERS.
2540	19D	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008.
2199	GCA	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA LISTS
1791	15A	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA LISTS.
1733	14R		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008 BUT NOT ON LIST. GOOD CONDITION.
793	WOODEN BALCONY COACH					POOR CONDITION.
1820	15AR		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008 – BUT NOT ON LIST – GOOD CONDITION
1197	8DW		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008 BUT NOT ON LIST. (SWAPPED WITH SAPPI FOR A 19D)
2060	15CB	X			X	MARKED HRASA AND FOTR
103	A	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008
E219	4E		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008
2540	19D	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008.
2199	GCA	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA LISTS
1791	15A	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA LISTS.
1733	14R		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008 BUT NOT ON LIST. GOOD CONDITION.
793	WOODEN BALCONY COACH					POOR CONDITION.
1820	15AR		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008 – BUT NOT ON LIST – GOOD CONDITION
1197	8DW		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008 BUT NOT ON LIST. (SWAPPED WITH SAPPI FOR A 19D)
2060	15CB	X			X	MARKED HRASA AND FOTR
103	A	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008
E219	4E		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008
781	5R	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA LISTS
E511	ES		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008
E1	1E	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008
K640091	TAMPING MACHINE		X		X	NOT MARKED

K640091	TAMPING MACHINE		X		X	NOT MARKED
462	6A	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA LISTS
723	5B	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA LISTS.
1211	8D		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008
1555	4AR	X		X		ON BOTH HRASA LISTS
1979	15BR	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008
375	S1		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2009
1474	3R	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008
4022	GEA		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008 – STORED NEXT TO THE COAL STAGE.
870	16DA	X			X	HARSA JUNE 2008
3451	25	X			X	HRASA JUNE 2008.
2077	15CA		X		X	HRASA JUNE 2008 – LAST BALDWIN LOCO LEFT.
totals	62	30	38	10	53	

Les also established that the following locomotives are still stored at Witbank shed: Class A number 150, Class G number 221, Class H2 number 249, Class 19A number 679, Class 7A number 1019; Class GM number 2301 and class GEA number 4003.

If you recall the original intent of the Red-Line List was to identify the critically important historical locomotives - there was no consideration of runnability. Les is right; if you use the ability of a loco to haul trains then the criteria are different. However I would argue that if any of the clubs would like to save locos for running trains then they should fund that. I for one donated funds to save the really historic locos from scrapping. We have ample examples of 15F/15CA available for trains, if any at Millsite are in really good condition, then of course we should attempt to save but I would make that a lower priority than saving the red line list.

As for 3R 1453 she is at SANRASM's site.

Also just in from Les:

"I would just like to place on record my disappointment at noting on my recent visit to the locomotive depot at Millsite, that the coal stage was in the process of being cut up!"

As a member of Steam in Action, I was extremely disappointed at the course of events; especially as Steam in Action had desperately tried to intervene to save the coal stage.

I've attached a photograph of the sad event for your records."

Les smith - An avid steam supporter



SIA COMMENT:

Les is correct. We believe that the necessary assurances had been received. Once again the scrap Industry prevails. We await a response from Transnet.

We welcome any further questions or comments from the members.

HRASA issues a Public Statement re: Change in Management

HRASA has been a rather controversial organisation of late. There has clearly been a lack of communication with other parties, and within itself. It has however achieved recognition with Transnet, Metrorail, the RSR and various government bodies.

It is thus important that it continues as the representative voice of the clubs, one that is respected and capable of delivering a mandate. It is a great stress on the clubs to fight little battles on their own, when a body with negotiating power could do this more effectively. It is thus HRASA's hope that it will be able to move forward, hand-in-hand with SIA, in order to keep heritage trains on the tracks, by providing assistance in dealing with the authorities. Together with this must come the buy-in of all interested parties and members, with the aim of expansion of the whole movement.

HRASA is clearly in need of restructuring. It also needs to have a long hard look at itself, recognise the strengths and weaknesses, and mould itself into a realistic framework of operation. Steps are currently underway to achieve this, and the following public statement was received from HRASA.

HERITAGE RAILWAY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

(A Section 21 company incorporated not for gain)



PO Box 28519 • Sunridge Park 6008 • Port Elizabeth • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Acting Chairman – Chris Janisch: Phone +27 12 545 9401 • Fax +27 12 545 9401 • Mobile +27 82 781 3285 • Email janisch24@gmail.com

Secretary – Nerina Skuy: Phone +27 41 3675280 • Fax +27 86 685 8251 • Mobile +27 82 921 8512 • Email hrasa@skuys.co.za / secretary@hrasa.co.za

Auditors: Moore-Stephens Chartered Accountants (SA) 401 Cape Road, Cotswold Port Elizabeth 6045 • Phone +27 41 365 3521 • Fax +27 86 675 5116

24 APRIL 2009

HRASA PUBLIC STATEMENT

The Board of Directors (BoD) of the Heritage Railway Association of South Africa (HRASA) would like to bring the following to your attention:

It has been recognised that HRASA is not performing as it should be, and is facing mounting difficulties. An initiative is underway to restructure the organisation, and create a positive framework for the future operations and undertakings by the heritage community.

At a meeting of the HRASA BoD in Port Elizabeth on 4 April 2009, the incumbent chairman, Mark Robinson, stood down in the interests of the Association. He, however, retains his position on the Board.

In terms of company law, the incumbent vice-chairman, Chris Janisch, has accepted his appointment as Acting Chairman. He will hold this post until the next AGM, when the members are free to elect a new chairman for the forthcoming year.

There is considerable work to do now, particularly with regards to rebuilding relations with Transnet and Government. We ask for the full support of the heritage railway community, so that we may progress in our quest to become an effective and respected organisation.

We also undertake to be transparent and impartial in our business, and will regularly keep the community updated with regards to progress made.

Thank you for your understanding.

HRASA BoD

Reg No: 2000/027224/08

Board of Directors 2008/9: Brinkman, B (Brinkman Ndayi McAlli) *Treasurer*; du Plooy, M (Reefsteamers); Gerber, A (PE Apple Express); Hart, J (Elgin Valley Railway); Janisch, C (Friends of the Rail) *Acting Chair*; Peter, A (Umgeni Steam Railway); Pretorius, I (Atlantic Rail); Robinson, MA (CREA); Skuy, N (Skuys Communications) *Secretary*; Lubbe, E (Co-opted)

Active Projects to Save Locomotives

This sad locomotive, which was in outstanding condition only a few years ago, is languishing at Patensie. Now that we have been advised that the Narrow Gauge line has been closed it really is stranded. Mike Myers, an Advisory Board member, has written to the Patensie community on the recommendation of the Heritage Foundation because apparently they are responsible for it.

If anyone has any comments to make we would appreciate them. So far there has been no reply.

"Sent: 27 March 2009 06:36 PM

To: Radie Ferreira

Subject: Offer to assist with the locomotive at Patensie

Dear Radie,

Re: Offer to assist with respect to NGG 13, No. 81 Locomotive.

We have had numerous discussions with Transnet, the Apple Express and various other government and semi-government organizations over the years regarding the future of this particular locomotive. We have inspected it periodically and some 5-6 years ago the locomotive was in pristine condition.

As a result of us winning a tender for 114 Narrow Gauge wagons our technical people were recently in Patensie and drew our attention to the fact that this locomotive was in quite a rapid state of deterioration. The next phase in its deterioration will be the removal of its key components to be sold for scrap. This is inevitable and it always happens.

During the Avontuur Adventurer trip which involved the steaming of NG 15, No. 1917 from Port Elizabeth to Avontuur and back we held discussions with various people in Patensie because this was our first night stop out of Port Elizabeth. At the time there appeared to be interest in rebuilding it and operating it on the Patensie to Port Elizabeth section of the line. Sadly this section of line now appears to be closed and therefore the original plan as envisaged would not be practical.

Although various discussions are taking place between many people we earnestly appeal to you to allow this locomotive to be placed in a safe, secure environment where it is free of rust and is completely insulated from the possibility of theft and vandalism. This means that it will always be available to be refurbished and possibly used as a later date on any Avontuur Line related activity.

The Sandstone Heritage Trust is prepared to move it to a place of safety without delay on the basis that it will simply be cosmetically improved and lubricated etc. to ensure that whatever deterioration is taking place is arrested entirely.

Our credentials are well known but of course we would be happy to answer any questions that might arise. Unfortunately time is no longer on our side so we would appreciate it if the matter could receive your prompt attention.

*Yours sincerely,
Michael C. Myers"*



Saving Locomotives - A Dilemma

SIA receives regular updates from people who draw our attention to locomotives that are in distressed circumstances. For example, there are two locomotives, a 15CB and 15CA at Xstrata Colliery near Witbank. Apparently there is some interest in acquiring the 15CA.

Both Sandstone and Reefsteamers have been approached regarding these locomotives but Sandstone has a good 15CB in their Ficksburg Branch Line loco shed and Reefsteamers has a 15CA in their line-up. This therefore raises an interesting dilemma. The cost of moving these locomotives would be colossal and since all their spares have been stripped off them there isn't much on the locos that could be of interest. Rather than end up with four non operational locomotives the money that would be spent in hauling them to a place of safety could conceivably be directed at the much better examples that are already in preservation.

The fact is SIA would like to save as much as possible but we have to face reality. We invite our members to comment.

SIA Investigates Transnet Heritage Foundation Locomotives stored at Jan Kempdorp

We have had a lot of questions from SIA members over the last year or so asking what the status is of a number of locomotives which are stored in a very secure Military

depot near Jan Kempdorp in the Northern Province. Mike Myers, one of our Advisory Board members, succeeded in negotiating with the Defence Force Headquarters to allow Lukas Nel, the man in charge of the Sandstone Heritage Trust loco refurbishment facility in Bloemfontein, to visit the site which is not far from Kimberley.

Lukas was able to photograph the locomotives and details of what he saw appear below:



Class 19D Number 2626
Wheels in a bad condition no boiler mounts or piping at all



Class 25NC Number 3409
Wheels in a bad condition otherwise not to bad, some boiler mounts available



Class 19D Number 2689
Not in a good condition, boiler mounts missing



Class 25NC Number 3498
Locomotive in a reasonable condition wheels hollow



Class 19D Number 2742
This locomotive is in fair condition but the wheels are a little bit hollow



Class 25NC Number 3528
In an excellent condition wheels a little bit hollow



Class 25NC Number 3438
Not in a good condition



Class 25NC Number 3453
Not in a good condition



Class 19D Number 2680
In a reasonable condition, no boiler mounts



Class 15F Number 3130
In a reasonable condition, no boiler mounts

All locomotive and tender wheels are worn within limits.

The locomotives are not stored under cover. It is interesting to note that 3409 is the only 25NC we know of that is fitted with Timken side rod roller bearings and is certainly the only one left in South Africa. Locomotive 3453 is fitted with a Berkley mechanical stoker.

No one seems to want to talk about these locomotives so we are taking the matter up with the Heritage Foundation once again in the hope that they will comment on them. What is significant is the fact that these locomotives were apparently transferred there originally by Transnet management for "safe keeping". It is quite obvious that despite the fact that they have been in a secure environment that they have suffered significant attrition.

In the same way we are pressing SANRASM for answers we will be asking Transnet why these locomotives appear to have been abandoned and why they have not entered into a dialogue with the various groups who could offer them some salvation.

Government Branch Line Feedback

The fate of many of the branch lines in South Africa has been bouncing around between local authorities, including municipalities, provincial governments, the Department of Transport, and of course Transnet. We have maintained contact with Chris Stretch, a senior executive in the Kwa-Zulu Natal Provincial Government.

Chris has kindly sent us this e-mail which he has authorised SIA to publish.

*"From: Chris Stretch [mailto:Christopher.Stretch@Kzntransport.gov.za]
Sent: 20 April 2009 11:17 AM
Subject: Branch lines*

Hi Guys,

Just some feedback regarding branch lines;

Transnet has placed a moratorium on the upliftment of all branch lines. I have written to them requesting that the moratorium is expanded to include all property, sidings, stations etc on the branch lines as well. It would seem that we may be closer than we think to seeing private operation on some branch lines, let's hope so, however we will have to see what strategy NDOT comes up with as well as ensuring access from the branch lines to the mains lines does not become a limiting factor !!

Regards

*Chris Stretch, Director: Freight Transport, Kwazulu-Natal Department of Transport,
Tel: 033 355 8872, Fax: 033 355 8932, Email: chris.stretch@kzntransport.gov.za*

The only concern that SIA has is that these moratoriums have been announced before but Propnet and other parts of the organisation were never told and continue to issue tenders for the scrapping of assets in defiance of the moratorium. Is the Chief Executive of Transnet considered to have sufficient authority to actually make something like this stick at all levels?

CNN London contacts SIA

"I work for CNN's feature show CNN Business Traveller. And we could be in SA next month to film for our June show since we will be there for INDABA.

From tomorrow I will be researching business in SA - perhaps investment for World Cup next year, tourism during a

recession etc... I was wondering if I could pick your brains for any major developments or trends that business execs/biz travellers would be interested in. Your thoughts would be most appreciated.

Best,
Ayesha Durgahee
Producer
CNN Business Traveller"

The Importance of Positive Media Coverage

South African railway history, both Main Line and Narrow Gauge, continues to receive considerable coverage in the international media. This is because there is a huge amount of interest. The locomotives were charismatic, the operating conditions were challenging, and the network was extensive beyond imagination.

David Payling has always been a good friend of South Africa's and he is particularly fascinated by South African 2-ft Narrow Gauge. He is very well informed and is a meticulous archivist and author on the subject. We thought it appropriate to draw SIA members attention to this excellent article on the NG15's. It was published by Continental Modeller but for those who are not modellers, which is probably the greater percentage of our members, we thought we should give you an opportunity to read it. It is extremely well written, illustrated, and educational. David is currently considering putting an article together on NG16, No. 88, which was one of the more prominent locomotives on the Alfred County Railway network in the past. It is currently nearing completion by the Sandstone Heritage Trust at their Bloemfontein workshops and David wants to write a follow-up article to the one attached.

If you have any information or photographs of No. 88 I know he would be delighted to receive them.

His e-mail address is as follows: david.payling@btopenworld.com.

[Click here to view PDF.](#)

The Way the World is Moving

An interesting article which appeared in a regular column by Peggy Noonan in the Wall Street Journal on April 17th entitled 'Goodbye Brand Affluence –get ready for authenticity chic' came to our attention. The article confirms that there is a strong movement towards simpler values, the use of less energy etc.

Two paragraphs caught our eye:

"The new home fashion will be spare. This will be the return of an old WASP style: the good, frayed carpet; dogs that look like dogs and not a hairdo in a teacup, as miniature dogs back from the canine boutique do now.

A friend, noting what has and will continue to happen with car sales, said America will look like Havana—old cars and faded grandeur. It won't. It will look like 1970, only without the bell-bottoms and excessive hirsuteness. More families will have to live together. More people will drink more regularly. Secret smoking will make a comeback as part of a return to simple pleasures. People will slow down. Mainstream religion will come back. Walker Percy again: Bland affluence breeds fundamentalism. Bland affluence is over."

SIA'S COMMENT

The only thing she forgot to mention was the return of the steam hauled train to reinvigorate rural communities. From an SIA standpoint the trend of global thinking is good.

From the Archives

Last month we included, for history's sake, the fascinating recollections of Albie Bester, from the time when he worked on the Class 25 Condenser tenders. We mentioned that SIA member Paul Ash's father, Kim, had written down his own memories of the connection between the Ash family and Henschel at the time of the purchase of these iconic locomotives. Paul has kindly given us permission to include his father's story here, and asked us to mention that his father passed away in September 2004.

Kim Ash writes:

"Paul, my son, has copied me the recent email "feeding frenzy" on Class 25 Condensing locomotives.

Now hear some words from someone who was actually there, at least for some of the time.

At 73 I am pedantic, so I shall "phoneticise" German words to ensure that they are properly pronounced. Where I have forgotten first names, surnames only will be used, with any appropriate titles or qualifications. Dipl.Ing. [Diplom Ingenieur] is equivalent of B.Sc. or M.Sc. Ober Ingenieur is Chief Engineer.

1. Some CVs:

1905 my father, Syd Ash, served apprenticeship at Robert Stephenson & Hawthorne, Newcastle-upon-Tyne followed by Mech. Eng. diploma at Armstrong College (Durham University).

1919, Johannesburg, Ash Brothers formed by recently "demobbed" Major Syd Ash (Royal Engineers) and Captain Arthur Ash (Royal Field Artillery).

1920 Brother Arthur returned to England and pursued a successful career as an architect.

1923 Ash Brothers approached by Henschel und Sohn ("Henshell oont Zone") Kassel, Germany; appointed their South African agent.

[Paradoxically, Syd Ash from North of England (Leeds) thereby represented locomotive company in Kassel and Dr.Theodore Reunert (Reunert & Lenz)- actually born in Kassel-represented North British Locomotive Company (NBL)!]

1937-1939 Langton Paton Ash did two year apprenticeship at Henschel followed by Mech.Eng. diploma at Wits Technical College.

1923 to 1939 many Henschel locomotives supplied to South African Railways [SAR], including Class 23's and the glorious 16E Pacifics for the Union Limited "Boat Train", fore-runner of the Blue Train.

1939-45 WW II.

1947-48 Oskar Henschel made contact, and visited S.A. to re-establish the relationship.

1948-49 Henschel & Ash Locomotive Company ("HALCO") formed to manufacture locomotives in S.A., and specifically to tender SAR for 100 Class S2 shunting locos. Contract awarded to Krupp, however, for reasons beyond the scope of these notes but an interesting story in its own right.

1956 I worked 31/2 months in Henschel drawing offices and on the shop floors during summer vacation from Mech.Eng. degree course, London University, and after qualifying in 1957, 3 months at General Motors Locomotive Division, La Grange, Illinois.

[Henschel had acquired a license to fit GM diesel engines and electric equipment in its own DE locomotives for Europe and Africa markets. At that time the Bundesbahn ("Boondessbarn") itself was pursuing a strictly diesel-hydraulic policy, based on the German Voith ("Foyt") and Mekhydro ("Mekheedroe") transmissions. The arrangement with GM was, of course, Henschel "hedging its bets"!]

In short, Ash Brothers was not just an "agent" [cf estate agent]-we did know something about locomotives.

2. Background to a "Bold Decision".

The late 1940's drought was about the worst S.A. had ever known.

With watering points on the main line in the Karroo running dry, the situation was critical. To keep traffic moving at all, SAR quite often had to dispatch more water-tanker trains than those for freight and passengers.

So what to do?

Diesel traction? SA had no oil and plenty of coal, facts-of-life with serious strategic implications. Moreover, at that time even in the USA, diesel was only just beginning to catch on. For SAR the lead time to implement such a programme would have taken quite a few years.

Electric traction? With no overhead catenary, no sub-stations, no national grid, and not nearly enough power stations-now we're talking decades.

Road transport? About half the road which is now the N1 was still corrugated gravel, and in some places there were even farm gates to be opened and closed! How long to upgrade ~700 km of road surface?

Airways for the passenger traffic? In Vickers Vikings (which had to land twice for fuel just to make Cape Town) DC 3s, Lockheed Lodestars, and a few DC 4 "Skymasters" just beginning to enter service.

Quite clearly, any realistic solution would have to involve finding more water--or using less of it.

In 1935 Syd Ash first drew SAR Administration's attention to Henschel's expertise with condensing steam locomotives, which included existing designs and patents. Experimental units had run on German railways, and numbers of condensers were in actual service in Russia and South America.

Faced with the water crisis described, SAR decided to conduct trials with a converted SAR Class 20 locomotive, Henschel to supply a condensing tender of suitable dimensions, and the essential accessories (smoke-box turbine/blower to create the necessary draught for the boiler, condensate return/feed etc.) for fitting locally.

I saw this tender when it arrived at Capital Park, and was shown over it by Heinrich Carl ["Hine-rish Kaal"], Henschel field engineer who had spent the war years in Argentina looking after the condensing locos in service there. We became good friends-he spent years in S.A., later with the Class 25s, GMA-M Garratts and, finally, the Class 61 Henschel-GM-Voith diesel-hydraulics.

The trials-in the Karroo and South-West Africa (Namibia)- were very successful. The Class 20 was quite an old design, of course, hand-fired and with a large (old fashioned?) steam collector dome (more of this later). I'm not sure even that it had superheaters?

[When he was writing his book "Ein Leben fuer die Lokomotive" ("Ine Laybn fuer dee Lawkawmawteef") many years later, Dr. Richard Roosen 'phoned me one day from Kassel to ask "What was that nickname the SAR men gave the Class 20 during the trials?" and I could tell him it was "Trapsoetjies" (actually, the correct spelling, "---suutjies" is only an alternative!) It means "soft-footstep, or tread sweetly" ("tip-toe"?), a picturesque reference to the quietness of the converted Class 20 which had, of course, no exhaust beat.

(By no stretch of the imagination, however, could this later also describe the Class 25's at work!)

Trapsoetjies is also an Afrikaans name for the chameleon (aka Verkleurmannetjie), descriptive of the way it moves].

3. Implementation of a "Bold Decision"-the Offers and the Orders

The ambition of every CME (Chief Mechanical Engineer) was to leave behind at least one significant locomotive design as a mark of his time in office, and for CME Grubb it was to be certainly the Class 25 (or NC), described to me many years later by then CME Emslie as "by far the most successful SAR steam loco ever".

In 1950 the SAR Administration issued specifications and invitations to tender for 90 Class 25 Condensing- and 50 Class 25NC (non-condensing) locomotives, indeed a giant leap from one simple, experimental unit to ninety of the most advanced, powerful and technically complex steam locomotives ever to enter SAR service. But "time was of the essence" and instead of design iterations and further tests which might have been prudent, Testosterone would simply have to suffice.

The Henschel-Ash tender consisted of quite a few massive, leather-bound volumes sufficient to fill a large suitcase. In Roosen's book there is a picture of my brother Langton and Heinrich Carl completing the daunting task of finally checking this "document" before submission.

Of the offers received, only those from Henschel and North British merited serious consideration, the condenser concept being, of course, essentially the Henschel speciality, but now there came a negotiated "role reversal". This was dictated by the urgency with which all the locos were required, NC's as well as 25's, the production capacities of the respective works, and also, no doubt, some political overtones. North British had been a competent and loyal supplier to the SAR for at least 20 years longer than Henschel had been, and there would have been a strongly argued case for such valuable orders to be shared as fairly as possible between the two companies.

And so it came to pass that NBL received contracts for 89 Class 25 and 11 Class 25NC locomotives, while Henschel received the orders for 1 Class 25 (for NBL to "copy"), 39 Class 25NC locomotives, and the Class 25 condensing tenders. In terms of total contract values, this was probably a reasonably fair split, even if it did not quite reflect the respective areas of expertise and competence.

[In my opinion, by the way, it would have been far more logical to have designated the non-condensers as Class 25s, and the condenser versions as-say-Class25Cs-- but no one consulted me.]

Execution of the orders demanded a commitment to close cooperation and consultation between two proud and competitive firms that represented a departure from "normal practice" almost as radical as the designs themselves. One may be amazed that the end result turned out as successfully as it eventually did.

As you can imagine, there was considerable traffic between Kassel and Glasgow, and hereby hangs an amusing anecdote: Technical Director of Henschel was Dipl.Ing. Freitag ("Freetarg"), and Company Secretary and PA to Oscar Henschel was Willie Christ ("...ist" as in "fist"). One day a puzzled secretary at NBL went through to Managing Director Arbuthnot and said "I've just received this weird telegram which reads 'Friday arrives Monday' and it comes from 'Christ' !! "

4. Some Technical Comments

This will be a short section. I was not a steam man, and not directly involved at the time. These notes are what I heard and read, then and later. I never heard any suggestion that the 25 basic design was a copy of a Norfolk&Western J type. To me it looked like a natural evolution of the Classes 15 and 23.

I remember a debate about firebox cross-stays, and that the Henschel view eventually prevailed.

The loco beds with integral cylinders were one-piece steel castings from General Steel Castings, aka "GSC" / "Commonwealth", and were very successful. GSC became a "preferred supplier" to SAR for many years, for any complex cast steel items (e.g. loco bogies), and SCAW Metals of Wadeville later obtained the license to manufacture their products locally. It was said at the time of adjudicating the Class 31 diesel-electrics tenders in 1957 that the willingness of GE to include GSC cast steel bogies tipped the decision in their favour; GM insisted on their standard "Flexicoil" bogies-"take it or leave it"-and lost it! Later they did see the light and started to get orders, but GE had a head start. All of the SAR electrics, from 5E onward, had GSC cast steel bogies, at least for the 3 kV DC types; what happened later on the 25kV AC types I have no idea.

The Timken roller bearings were a serious problem, never resolved. I know that Bill Arthur, MD at the time of Timken SA, literally went grey with the worry and the stress. Eventually SKF bearings were fitted instead.

Before commencing manufacture, Henschel had queried a design detail on the valve gear; I believe it had something to do with the securing method of the reverser crank. 'Old Hands' in Kassel remembered earlier problems with similar designs from years back, but CME's office insisted there would be no modifications.

Which leads to another anecdote-amusing only because it had a happy ending:-

The first loco to be delivered was a 25NC from Kassel, its erection at SAR 's Salt River workshops supervised by Heinrich Carl. Needless to say, the first test run attracted considerable attention, and present on the footplate that day were the then Minister of Transport, Paul Sauer, probably Ben Schoeman who later became Minister, several senior SAR men and Heinrich himself. The locomotive was, of course, "running light", and all went smoothly until "someone" began urging the driver to open the regulator-more-then still more. (When I asked him what speed actually was reached, Heinrich would answer only by putting his finger to his lips-he wouldn't say). Whatever the speed was, the valvegear finally flew off, smashed away the brake cylinders, and there was the first, brand-new 25 with a load of VIP's on board, doing perhaps 140 km per hour and no brakes. The presence of mind of the driver hanging on to the whistle lanyard, and of the signallers setting points and signals appropriately, allowed the loco to coast to a safe stop along many, many kilometres of reasonably straight track. The design of the valve gear was duly referred back to the drawing office.

Every one of the contracts we ever did included a file section headed "Maker's Defects". Often more than one large file was necessary-sometimes an entire shelf. Described also by a euphemism "teething troubles", and stressful as these were from time to time, usually they could be dealt with reasonably quickly, and were accepted as inevitable when dealing with highly complex machines operating in arduous conditions. The Class 25, however, turned out to be in a class of its own!

5. The Class 25 Condenser Troubles.

The problems specific to the condensers involved lubricating oil contamination in the boiler feedwater, and what was going on--or not going on--up front, in the "smokebox". I deal with these-more or less-in the order in which they appeared.

5.1. Oil contamination in the condensate (i.e. the return feedwater to the boiler).

This possibility, in my opinion, could have been foreseen, anticipated and dealt with during design. Potentially it was, of course, extremely serious-boilers can explode this way-although a story of the footplate crew of a 25 "fleeing for their lives at Laingsburg" strikes me as one of those legends, probably apocryphal-and not one boiler ever did explode!

Be that as it may-the solution was quite easily and quickly applied. Large-or larger-filter units were fitted in the condensate return lines from the tender to the boiler feedwater pumps, and the cartridges-or sponges as we knew them-were treated simply as a regular maintenance item, like the air-, oil-, and fuel on your motor car. [I remember processing orders from SAR for these elements into the 1970s.]

Another anecdote from that time which did not add lustre to the name of NBL. Early in the oil contamination problem, and before a solution had been formulated, there had been some suggestion that the 25's might have to be converted to NC's. NBL "pricked up its ears" at this possibility-they would be the obvious choice to do such work, and under the circumstances would be able to "name their price". During a meeting in the office of SAR's then General Manager Du Plessis, NBL's MD reportedly attempted to add some impetus to this idea, saying that he would never put one of his own men on the footplate of one of those locomotives-he would not be willing to have the possible consequences on his conscience.

Du Plessis responded by pointing to the copies of the tender and contract documents on the table in his office, saying "Have you actually read the conditions applicable to the order, in terms of which you are, right now, delivering 89 of 'those locomotives'?"

If not, I would suggest that you do so without delay." No more was said on this topic!

5.2 Failures of the blower turbines.

Without a blast of exhaust steam from the cylinders to create draught for combustion in the firebox, a condensing locomotive has 'artificial means' for doing this—a powerful blower driven by a steam-turbine operating on exhaust steam on its way back to the condensing tender. Design and manufacture of this component for the 25's was sub-contracted to Escher-Wyss ("Esha-Veece"), a world-renowned Swiss company in the field of steam turbines, and the product was fully up to expectations.

Then turbines started failing, sometimes in the most embarrassing situations, e.g. at the head of the Blue Train trying to get started out of Park Station, Johannesburg (screaming headlines in the Star and the Daily Mail, questions in Parliament) and continued randomly, frequently and completely unpredictably, and the engineers were baffled.

Many visits from Kassel by Dr Frietag, Dr Roosen and his chief designer Dipl.Ing Hany ("Harnee"—a delightful, tall and gangling Austrian with buck teeth and a great sense of humour), Dipl.Ing. Herbie Anzinger (delightful Bavarian, we became close friends) and, of course, Heinrich Carl who was here anyway, plus specialists from Escher Wyss. In some desperation, even the CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research) was consulted, and I recall being taken to dinner by Dr Loubser (then-or later-head of CSIR) when I was working in Kassel in 1956. He was looking at the design of the turbine-blade fastenings (the blade-roots) but declared himself also completely baffled. The problem seemed to be intractable—to defy any solution. (Interestingly, Dr Loubser was a son of a previous CME of the SAR; his brother Kobus became Chief Stores Superintendent [CSS], CME and, in due course, General Manager!)

One day a Class 25 blew a cylinder-head off, a manifestation not unknown with steam locomotives, due to what used to be called "priming" i.e. too much water (incompressible) collecting between the piston head and the cylinder cover. After this had happened a few more times, "a penny dropped", could this be a factor in the turbine problem? Yes it could—water carryover from the massively powerful 25 boiler could cause excess water in the exhaust steam to the blower turbine spinning at many thousands of r.p.m.—one might just as well have chucked handfuls of lead shot into the turbine blades. But having found the probable cause, what to do about it? The design of the boiler (it had hardly any collector dome) and its sheer power made the problem as intractable as ever, and I remember some weird and wonderful solutions put forward.

In the end it was Hany who came up with the answer—a classic example of the application of "lateral thinking". He pointed out that, as the turbine was being expected to operate with a high water content in the steam, what was called for was a simple water turbine—along the lines of a Pelton wheel—instead of a sophisticated, reaction-type turbine which would have operated perfectly with superheated-, or even saturated-, steam. On a drawing board in his hotel room in Pretoria, he designed a simple, Pelton-type turbine and several were then made up in the SAR Koedoespoort workshops. The blades were made out of boiler-tubing cut in half, ground and polished, and welded to the hub. It worked! Later, rather more refined replacements were manufactured and sent from Germany.

5.3 More trouble in the smokebox: Blower failures.

These were not as dramatic as the turbines' had been, but they did go on and on, and in the end a perfect solution could not be found and a compromise had to be accepted.

The wear of the blades on the blowers was so severe that they were having to be replaced at service intervals which were quite unacceptable, sometimes after only hundreds of kilometres instead of the tens of thousands which would have been considered normal.

The factors at work were coal quality, the mechanical stoker (not fitted, of course, on the test Class 20), and the high firing rate required by this powerful boiler. [A standing joke about the coal was that it ought to be measured not in tons but in hectares, when defining tender capacities and loco consumptions, because of the high percentage of stone content!]

The stoker, working at high rates like a mill, would grind the coal into relatively smaller chunks, and the uncombusted fragments then blast down the firetubes as a hot and highly abrasive char into the blades of the spinning blower. No machine or material could withstand such treatment for long. Many redesigns of blower wheels and blades were tried out, as well as many experiments with different blade materials, coatings and heat treatments, and some significant improvements were achieved. In the end, however, it had to be accepted that the smokebox blower was a wearing item which would have to be replaced at regular, servicing intervals, and with sufficient stocks of spares held in reserve.

I remember playing golf in 1958 with my brother and 'Wynn' Douglas—by then Chief Mechanical Engineer. Over drinks after the game the question of blower mileages came up. Langton indicated that the latest figures he had were for an average of about 8000 miles (~13000 km) between replacements. Douglas seemed to be quite pleased with this answer!

5.4 A corollary problem to the difficulties in the smokebox was the quantity of char out of the chimney, and not being ejected high enough, especially when the blower blades were beginning to wear. This caused serious discomfort to engine crews, also to passengers in non-air-conditioned coaches; there were not a few cases of tarpaulins on goods waggons—and even the waggons themselves—being set alight! A partial solution to this was to fit high-velocity steam ejector nozzles in the stacks, to augment the draught, and some improvement was achieved.

6. Summary and conclusion

The Class 25s were never regarded as a "nice to have", a prestige item for the SAR to brag about. They were put into service, in a hurry, to solve a serious and urgent problem, and this they certainly did.

Henschel could also claim with absolute justification that the condensing tenders themselves gave almost no trouble at any stage, and met their design criteria of up to 90% water saving, and a fuel saving of about 7%.

They remained in service as condensers for many years; I know this for a fact, because I processed the spares orders!

It goes without saying that they were considerably more expensive to maintain than the Class 25NCs-they were considerably more complex locomotives-but they finally converted to non-condensers not because of these service costs but because there was no longer a water crisis to deal with.

[The converted 25s, by the way, must be just about the ugliest locomotives I have ever seen!]

7. Epilogue

My brother, Langton, was severely stressed throughout this epic saga. He was in the front line, in the trenches, the first to get the heat from a demanding and sometimes angry customer, the first to have to swallow the disappointment of yet another failed design modification or test run. These many years took an enormous physical toll of him.

One chilly winter morning in August 1961 I went through to his office to discuss a telegram I had just received from Henschel. They planned a demonstration tour with a new diesel locomotive to Central Africa, Angola and the Congo, and wanted us to participate with trials in S.A. and also to assist with the logistics of transiting the unit from Durban to the north.

I found him sitting at his desk, stretching and writhing, and complaining of muscular pain in his back and arms. He wouldn't hear of my calling a doctor, but then he got up, lay down on the table in his office, and he died. He was forty three."

Regional News

Friends of the Rail Update

Chris Janisch writes:

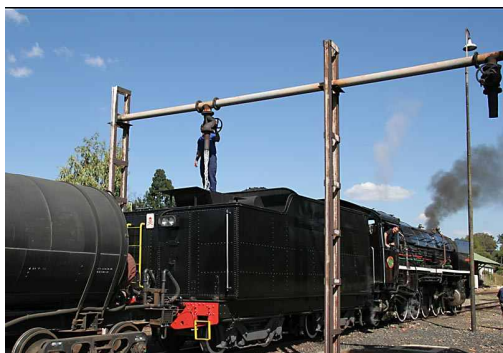
FOTR continues to run a barrage of full and successful trains. Our new pet project, 15F 3117, had her first run to Cullinan on 29 March, for the Morris Minor club. The loco was posed alongside some classic cars for some shots, and then proceeded to give the passengers a memorable trip back to Pretoria. A few repairs were necessary, but she is fit again and ready to work 3 trains in May. 19D 2650, our stalwart loco, has been seen on Culinan and Tshwane Explorer trains around Pretoria, and runs faultlessly.



24 No 3664 is in for some expensive repairs to her motion. The big bushes on the coupling rods are being replaced, so she will stand for a while. Parts have been purchased, so it is a question of doing the hard work.

Our 15CA 2850 was internally inspected recently, and her boiler found to be in a good condition. Restoration should thus not be too costly, but the manpower is lacking. Our main focus is on filling the trains and keeping them running, in order to raise funds for our move to Hermanstad(Hercules) depot. Already all trains depart from there, but we are in the process of laying track for our storage sidings. Some great work was undertaken earlier in the year, with a whole section of track laid from the western TFR yard to our entrance gate. Sleepers and track have been sourced and work on the site is ongoing.

It may not be realised what an expensive undertaking it is to build a depot. The odds on paper would appear to be heavily against success. But due the remarkable fortitude of the Friends, in their quest to make steam dreams come true, it is becoming a reality. Contributions of any kind to the cause are necessary, and we appeal to you all for assistance.



Reefsteamers Brings 12AR Back into Service

Here are pictures of Reefsteamers 12AR 1535's first run out to Magliesburg on 30 March. She ran well except for a problem with one of the valve motion bushes



running hot, but nothing serious. Nice to see her running again after all the work that has been put in. Photos courtesy of Aidan McCarthy.



Alwyn Vintcent Steam Tug - Cape Town

This certainly stirred an instant reaction and some controversy.

Dylan Knott who is also one of the younger SIA members and supporters was we believe acting in absolute good faith. His response to the comments which appear seem well balanced and appropriate.

"Thanks very much for publishing the article icw the steam pilot tug Alwyn Vintcent. Quite a large number of SIA's members read it and I received quite a large response. A few people misinterpreted the article, but generally I believe SIA has the reach within its target marked as demonstrated here.

A short update is that the owner has re-established contact and has confirmed that he is busy finalizing plans to ship the vessel to Australia. She appears safe at present. The Waterfront have also backed down on any plans to scrap the vessel.

I will keep everyone informed on the vessel's progress.

Thanks again to SIA for assisting with this issue.

*Kind regards
Dylan Knott"*

Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe

We provided an updated report last month. We have made sure that SIA is talking to everyone who seems to be involved one way or the other with the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe.

The attached press release was recently received from Mr Garth Strachan, MEC of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism.

At least the future of the railway is receiving constant attention but it does look as if Transnet have washed their hands of it.

If you have specific views on this I am sure Mr. Strachan would like to hear from you. His e-mail address is as follows: 0834546667@mtnloaded.co.za.

*"MEDIA STATEMENT
April 17, 2009*

MEC Garth Strachan clarifies Outeniqua Choo Tjoe situation

"The Outeniqua Choo Tjoe report, entitled Feasibility Study for the Future Viability of the Outeniqua Choo Tjoe, was handed to me on March 17, 2009.

"This followed a study commissioned by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism and completed by a private sector company after a long process of engagement with stakeholders, including local municipalities, in a Southern Cape Steering Committee.

"Arising from this report, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism made recommendations to me as the MEC of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism.

"The Outeniqua Choo Tjoe is a tourist icon in the Province and we would like to save it. Accordingly, I have written to the Minister of Public Enterprises to recommend certain steps for the new incoming national government.

"As a result of the process outlined above, the Provincial Government of the Western Cape has developed businesses cases for revitalisation and upgrading of the Outeniqua Choo Tjoe.

"The proposal is to establish a high level team comprising delegates from national and Western Cape departments and public entities that will develop attractive investment opportunities based on the feasibility studies. These would be marketed domestically and internationally.

"If possible this would include a tender or request for interest process to allow private sector investment and involvement on either one of the two possible lines: the George/Mossel Bay line or George/Knysna line. The investment opportunities and the criteria - including black economic empowerment, job creation and community tourism - would be defined by the team as part of the process.

“Obviously the investment product or products will be more attractive if an operating steam train has the requisite staff in place at the time of a request for proposal or tender process. I understand that current losses to Transnet are of the order of R850 000 a month. My appeal to the national government includes a request to keep open the line until March 31, 2010 to allow the process to unfold and a decision be taken by November 2009.

“Time is of the essence. Stakeholder consultations, by their nature, are often time consuming and this long process has placed added pressure on efforts to save the Outeniqua Choo Tjoe. Nevertheless I am confident that with the co-operation of the national government, efforts to save the Outeniqua Choo Tjoe can succeed.”

Ends

Issued by the Oryx Multimedia

On behalf of the Office of the MEC Finance Economic Development and Tourism. For further information contact MEC Garth Strachan 083 454 6667”

SIA'S COMMENT

SIA is astonished that this railway could be losing R850,000 per month. While not wanting to impugn the competence of the officials who are running it, there is no question that a private sector organisation, driven by a desire for much greater efficiency and the constant emphasis on cost consciousness could run trains at a much lower rate. A few of our members who operate large Main Line locomotives in Southern Africa have studied this figure and believe that they could reduce this loss significantly through the implementation of greater efficiency at all levels. There is no doubt that there are certain things that government should do. Generally speaking, as in France and Switzerland, governments can add real value to a railway network but we are increasingly of the opinion that in preservation it needs a unique blend of competence, strong support from volunteers, and a liberal application of ingenuity to keep these applications running efficiently but without incurring extravagant expenses. One only has to go to the National Railways of Zimbabwe Bulawayo steam sheds to see what can still be achieved when the chips are really down. We hope that the authorities take this message on board.

News from America

We have received the following from Garratt Bucher.

“I have attached hereto a few pictures I thought you might like. The first is myself with Billy Bester in 1984 next to number 55 at the Weenen station. The second is of NGG13 #77 leaving Weenen on a cold winter morning in 1977 I believe.

Also attached are pictures of NGG13 #78 in action. Picture number 1 is taken right outside of Escourt at a spot my dad calls junk yard curve. Interestingly enough the goods car G-4 1447 directly behind the loco is now in our collection. The second is at the Weenen loco shed. The third is of the goods car in its current state and the fifth is of its builders plate showing its American Heritage. Who would have thought that it would be built in America, sent to Africa and then 40 years later return home. I think there are only 6 G-4 class cars remaining. We have 5 of them and I noticed one in your collection. I believe 1447 and 1450 are the only two that still have their original sliding door.

Hope things are going well on your side of the world.

*Sincerely,
Garratt Bucher”*



Member's Feedback

We appreciate that many of our members are busy but if a thought occurs to you please communicate with us.

We are a consensus organisation and we do attempt to reflect the thoughts and views of our members where possible. In fact on that subject we have got some interesting thoughts on what our approach should be.

We have been greatly heartened by the amount of interest shown by members of all ages. To illustrate this point we have attached a registration confirmation from a 15-year old lad in South Africa who would like to do whatever he can to participate in the Steam Preservation world. The fact that teenagers are now coming forward to join Steam in Action is extremely encouraging.

*"I'm a steam freak. I have always loved steam locos since I was born. I am 15 years old and have never met another person my age that loves real live steam locos. Many others just loving the models. I have taken tons of digital photos. I have been privileged to receive advice from my father (Tony Attwell) and to have travelled all across SA. My earliest memories of steam, was of the class 26 early in the morning at De Aar depot. I would really love to help in any way possible during my school holidays with SIA and the preservation of these African "Beasts."
James Lee Attwell"*

Reefsteamers response is enthusiastic and appropriate.

"Dear James,

Welcome to Steam in Action, you will find joining well worth it and very action and fact orientated!

I know you father Tony Attwell very well and in fact you too as we have been involved in steam throughout the time we have know each other and I would really be pleased if you would contact me so I can set up a visit for you to our depot in Germiston which you are also familiar with and show you what we are doing. We really need younger members to be involved in steam and railway preservation because there are some positive changes taking place and Transnet seems to have made a mind shift in terms of assisting and working with steam operators.

Your dad is now a qualified fireman and we would like to see you both join Reefsteamers so that he can have the opportunity to fire various locomotives and you can follow in his footsteps. Our workshop, footplate and coaching teams are all very accommodating and you can decide where you will best fit in and we will be glad to assist you in that field.

Do also remember that Reefsteamers is working hand in hand with the Sandstone Heritage Trust and we have become the operator for their railway system and workshops and we do on occasion go down with a team of Reefsteamers members and run the railway for an event like the recent Maluti Magic weekend were we hosted some of the UK's and Europe's top railway preservationists. You would also enjoy this as well as your father because it gives you exposure to the Narrow Gauge to!

*Shaun Ackerman
Reefsteamers Association for Steam in Action"*

"Please could you explain to me, how would I go about getting my qualifications as a Locomotive Fireman?

I am very interested in getting these qualifications and soon qualify as a Steam locomotive Driver.

*Yours Sincerely + Steam Greetings
Hawkin Hansen, Age 17"*

"You are more than welcome to use my comments in the next SIA newsletter. My first experience of South Africa dates back to 1946, when our family arrived in Cape Town en route for S.W.A. We caught the train for Windhoek (a three day journey) and headed northwards. A day marooned at Putzsonderwater followed by three days stuck at Upington was my first taste of train travel in S.A. But I can remember the little N.G.11 departing for Kakamas and later on seeing the narrow gauge ore trains at Usakos when travelled to Swakomund for holidays. After two years we returned to England and I resumed my education, but love for Africa had been kindled.

After an apprenticeship with J Stone & Co. who made train lighting equipment including headlights and steam turbos I spent two years with the Royal Signals after which I lived in Upington travelling the Kalahari for three years. And marrying my wife Val in Potgeiterus.

We then lived the next forty years in Sussex where I ran my own coach company and at the same time becoming a trustee and starting up Amberley Chalk Pits Museum which is home to one of the finest collection of narrow gauge collections in the U.K. We are now retired living near Dartmouth on the beautiful river Dart and my transport activity is limited to Guard duties on the South Devon Railway.

I was really tempted to go again with Geoff Cooke`s tour but Val decided that she couldn`t take the six separate run-pasts at each location again. Keep up the Good Work on the Web Site!

*Sincerely Yours,
Roger Belsey"*

"I do believe the Waterval Boven chaps (Oosterlijn) are getting started again and I hear they are getting their 25NC ready for boiler test as Braam Le Roux is due to visit there and they want to run a trip. Also heard they will be certifying at least three footplate personnel.

Framed through one of the holes in the buffer of 19D 2650, we see the beautiful form of 3117 as she stands alongside.

*Nathan Berelowitz
Friends of the Rail"*

SIA COMMENT

Any further news of the above developments.



Although SIA's membership is impressive and continues to grow, it is obvious that a lot of people take advantage of the web site and support what we are doing, although they do not actually join. It will be interesting to know how big this constituency really is but we obviously encourage people to join because it raises our credibility with the authorities when we are negotiating key issues with government policy.

Piet Conradie is a non SIA member who pointed out that our Home page was not up-to-date. That has been corrected. Here is a reply from Andy Selfe, an Advisory Board member, who makes some valid points.

"From: Piet(er) & Elna Conradie [mailto:pietconradie@cybersmart.co.za]

Sent: 22 April 2009 13:22

To: joannewest@btinternet.com

Subject: Re: the steam-in-action home page seems a bit dated ... we're well into 2009 ...

Joanne,

it is my pleasure to help! I have checked ... looks much better now!

I am very very impressed with the way SIA is going ... and watching developments keenly ... may become a member in due time

regards

Piet

From: Andy Selfe [mailto:aselfe@mweb.co.za]

Sent: 22 April 2009 11:54 PM

To: pietconradie@cybersmart.co.za

Hello there!

Joanne just passed on your mail. I'm an advisory Board member of Steam in Action, and it's good to know there are real people out there watching our website, thank you for pointing it out that it was out of date.

We'd certainly like it if you were to join up, it's not painful, just a monthly notice that a fresh newsletter is out which you can download at your leisure.

However, the strength of SIA is in the numbers of the members. Recently, 'the Railways' (the name changes with the seasons) were busy cutting up priceless steam locomotives at Millsite. Some were the last examples in the world, supposed to have been set aside for preservation. With little effort, many of us wrote e-mails to certain key individuals.... you can imagine only a small percentage of 800 people! Well, we bombed out their e-mail systems and they were forced to call a halt, and the items have been saved.

Delicate negotiations have been taking place since, between SIA and 'the railways', regarding those which would be best to save, to move them to places where they'll be safe, and hopefully restored.

We certainly hope you will join up!

Regards

Andy Selfe"

Would members please keep us on our toes as far as our web site is concerned.

"To SIA,

A suggestion. I think driver experience courses would work very well in SA, and perhaps that is something SIA could coordinate. Sandstone is probably the best-equipped to offer these. For the confirmed steam addicts, 25km at the regulator would be a dream that would be difficult to replicate anywhere else in the world. The only place that comes close is running mainline steam in Poland, but the long-term future of that operation seems to be in doubt. It's certainly a programme that if priced right, would draw people from all over the world. In the sense that you have a lot of locomotives, and two branch lines, Sandstone could run an "engineers" programme that would be the envy of any other operator.

Locally, there is demand for the experience but possibly on shorter legs. I understand the idea generated a lot of cash for FOTR and there people had the regulator for a few hundred metres only.

Paul Ash"

"There is a lot of good news in the March Newsletter, which reflects the power and credibility of SIA.

As an Advisory Board member wearing my KZN hat and acting as a correspondent to SIA for Umgeni Steam Railway, I would like to report as follows. A large amount of capital has been used on the retubing of 'Maureen', which has taken up more money and time than anticipated. The back-up steam loco, was planned to be ready for tomorrow's runs to Inchanga is still not ready. So they have had to hire a diesel loco from Transnet at a cost of R39, 800 and the price increase of diesel oil makes the runs non-viable. However, they did not want to ruin their image by cancelling at the last minute.

My efforts to get help from the various tourist groups, LOTTO and some corporates has not yet borne fruit. The improved publicity is getting more passengers, but the market in Durban and surrounds is very difficult and the crime, grime and decay, plus lack of an international Airport has deterred foreign visitors. If only USR can hang in until 2010, it should get back to its former glory. I felt SIA should be aware of this.

Robin Taylor"

For the record your Advisory Board members are as follows:

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Friends of the Rail: www.friendsoftherail.com

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Your comments, queries and suggestions are always welcome! Please email: joannewest@btinternet.com

This newsletter was produced by and on behalf of the members by the Steam in Action Advisory Board