



EDITION 19 KEEPING TRACKS JUNE 2009

Welcome
to the June newsletter.

Membership total as at 29th June 2009: 815

The Future of Steam in Action

We guess we have to face up to the fact that we have no official standing in their eyes. That is not particularly critical because we never did have and although we tried hard to establish ourselves as a credible organization Transnet decided to stick to their HRASA arrangements.

The good news is that HRASA is now staffed by competent people and we believe they will shortly have new offices, a website etc. We assume that they are being funded by Transnet but of course we are not currently privy to what is happening in various meetings that are taking place.

There are a few schools of thought as to what should happen to SIA under the circumstances:

1. The first is that SIA should work alongside HRASA. We have requested HRASA to explain how they see this working but we have not received any response to our request. Despite this and on further reflection we do not think that a working relationship is viable because there is too much overlap in terms of the objectives each organisation has and there are bound to be issues where agreement cannot be reached which will affect the relationship. It is also impractical to double brand an organization. For example HRASA wanted us to jointly exhibit with them at the Railways African exhibition in Johannesburg recently. We pointed out that if somebody asked "Explain the difference between SIA and HRASA" what would they say? No one seemed to have an answer to that question which is understandable.
2. It should merge with HRASA. That won't work because SIA is proactive and doesn't mind telling the truth. HRASA on the other hand must always walk on eggshells lest it alienate the authorities (Read civil servants).
3. We disband it.
4. It remains an enthusiasts blog.
5. The final alternative is for a group of members to decide that they would like to keep SIA going as is but we believe that without strong executive input of the type that Mike Myers puts in every single day, i.e. attending meetings and talking on the phone to try and get issues clarified etc., that this will not really work and there are enough newsletters floating around that record historical facts. SIA's current policy is to be proactive and to provide a news service which tries to monitor as many issues as possible. To be fair it only needs 1 or 2 wide awake individuals to do that but we will discontinue performing that function in the immediate future. Our current policy is to copy everything to HRASA and let them best decide how to handle the information, requests, queries, loco danger alerts etc.

Elize Lubbe and Les Smith, both Advisory Board members from Reefsteamers, have recently resigned as a Advisory Board members. Elize never participated in SIA affairs but Les was hugely supportive. The dilemma that seems to exist is that pro SIA people may be seen as anti HRASA so we can expect more resignations. As an example Elize Lubbe has advised Reefsteamers members to throw their lot in with HRASA. We fully understand that people must back the "winner". Again due to HRASA's renewed vigour and with a new management team at the helm that is probably a good idea.

We looked upon SIA as the hammer and anvil in the creation of a strong lobbying organisation which performed the function of an emergency services vehicle which came to the rescue of South African locomotives at a very critical time. We have had enough surveillance and enough support from our members to be alert to the ongoing obscenities that have occurred and although it has not always been able to prevent rail heritage items from being cut up we have perhaps changed the mood of the country which seems to be becoming much more pro Steam and pro Heritage Railways. Of course that is contradicted by the statements made by Transnet that virtually no lines will be made available for that purpose.

The Sandstone Heritage Trust currently hosts all the managerial, secretarial and web hosting facilities which costs us in the region of R20,000 a month to maintain purely on SIA's behalf. Obviously HRASA, possibly supported by a budget from Transnet, will set up bigger and more impressive structures and therefore the people that contribute to SIA's newsletter and web site can presumably contribute to HRASA's.

We have had some e-mails which give the impression that there has been a fight to the death between HRASA and SIA. That is not true. Had HRASA been a vibrant organisation when we entered the scene we would not have bothered to start SIA and we would have supported HRASA but we were shunned comprehensively by the management at that time. In any event there was no proper structure, no office, and no meaningful communications capability. The very reasons that SIA was created are automatically uncreated by HRASA's rejuvenation which we see as a logical development rather than a confrontation. However it remains to be seen whether HRASA will be rejuvenated and whether a truly competent creative board will have been elected at their AGM.

Sandstone itself has spent over R5 million this year alone buying up valuable Heritage assets from the scrap industry. This generation will probably remain fairly indifferent to it but hopefully future generations will record that it was probably a good idea. In fact to a large extent SIA was born out of the attempts by Sandstone and in particular Gert Jubileus to monitor every loco in South Africa and to check regularly on how threatened it was. The fact that the responsibility for this now becomes a National one under a National umbrella organisation supported by a national rail parastatal is a much more healthy development than having a farm in the Eastern Free State trying to do it single handedly and SIA was created with the specific objective of sharing the load. So many new role players have spoken up since SIA was formed that we can truly say that an unstoppable wave has developed.

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From an SIA member's communication perspective interest levels are declining. We had a very poor response to our April newsletter and virtually a non-existent response to the May one. Typically we would get e-mails back within hours of it going out and that does not happen anymore. We also did a mini market survey by checking with members what they thought of the May newsletter and we were a little bit saddened to discover that in 80% of the cases they said that they were too busy to read it and in fact had not read the last 3-4 newsletters. Again this is understandable because it is quite a formidable document to open and it is generally only retired people who have the time who actually absorb these newsletters in their entirety. With these facts to hand we have to question whether the work that goes into producing these newsletters is actually justified. It takes two fairly senior people about 2-3 days to compile it from beginning to end, together with a creative person (Karyn Clarke) and then of course all the links have to be set-up by Tony Phipps (Web Master) before it goes to Joanne West who actually sends it out. We are like editors of a major newspaper on deadline and that is something that we hope to avoid in the future.

Four advisory Board members have already said that they think that we should join forces with HRASA but no one has explained how that would work. There is no clear definition between the two organisations and in any case Transnet has clearly said that it views HRASA as the industry representative and will have no direct relationship with SIA. This means that everything we do would have to be filtered and approved and effectively pass a censorship test before we are able to do it. We know from experience that in this business Speed and Action count for a lot and we do not think that type of structure would lend credence to the very name of our organisation called 'Steam in Action'.

We may have paid the price of telling civil servants that they were civil servants and we were not necessarily going to accept no for an answer and unfortunately this may have also hardened their attitude towards us dramatically. We doubt very much if we would have achieved anything had we followed the same basic strategic path that HRASA has followed for many years. We must say that we are not particularly in agreement with HRASA's appeal for patience. In a recent e-mail we received they said that the objectives that are being set could take up to 20-years to achieve. That may be so but we fear for the well-being of the assets that are standing out there exposed as they are to the manifest dangers that surround them. The preservation industry has a very good record of complaining about things but as soon the obstacles appear to be insurmountable they scrub it from the agenda and make the point that we cannot save everything. They forget that a large percentage of everything has already disappeared and there is in fact not an awful lot left. We are not only referring to locomotives but to rolling stock, water tanks, station buildings, sidings, branch lines etc. For those in the UK the lessons learnt at Barry Scrap Yard in Wales many years ago are not something that is very well understood in South Africa. Every single locomotive and antique item of rolling stock is venerable, has a heritage status, should be saved and the fight should reflect that.

HRASA recently mentioned a possible compromise where the bulk of the Millsite locomotives are cut up to raise funds to do various other things. We do not believe that is the right approach but it is one which Transnet has the power to implement should they decide and if they receive HRASA's blessing then of course they will proceed without delay because that is what they have been doing on an ongoing basis for many years now. We believe that Transnet needs a Private sector rubber stamp to allow them to do what they have already decided to do. Cynical yes, but heavily supported by historical facts.

Many of us in Preservation have observed the interesting corollary between an interest in Steam Preservation and a reluctance to engage when it really counts. The greater percentage of people who communicate with SIA are in fact kabitizers who offer comment but when SIA asks them to perhaps deal with the issue themselves or make a positive contribution or get involved they quickly retreat and we do not hear from them again. This is a common complaint throughout the Heritage sector but armchair only participation may be more prevalent in the Steam Railway Heritage sector than in others.

It is over to you the members. No one's lives will change either way whether SIA continues or decides to recommend that its members join HRASA. We are completely relaxed about it either way.

Thought of the Day

"If you think you're too small to make a difference, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito."

Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe

This important subject has hit the mainstream global media. The Times in the UK published an article over the weekend which is creating waves internationally.

See <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/africa/article6586269.ece>.



One of our active members Aidan McCarthy has also come up with an excellent recommendation which has been forwarded to all the appropriate authorities.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This business plan was circulated to SIA Advisory Board members on 2nd June but we have only had one response so far. Obviously the matter is complex because until the authorities actually take the private sector support initiative seriously the situation will remain frustrating.

GEORGE KNYSNA REHABILITATION

Phase 1

Objective: - To get a sustainable service running between Sedgfield and Wilderness. This section is probably the easiest and most cost effective to get operating. All the work done during this phase will form the basis of the further phases. It is critical to get a service up and running as quickly as possible even if over a very short section to keep people interested and show that something is happening.

Locomotives: - Use the class GB and GF Garratt locomotives. These are existing THF locomotives and are both in a nominally serviceable condition. The section between Sedgfield and Wilderness is flat so the GB should have no problem handling the load. The use of Garratt locomotives means that there is no requirement for turning facilities. It is critical to have two operational locomotives so that you have a backup.

Time table: Have two trips a day from Sedgfield to Wilderness. Start off running something like Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

Steps required for implementing phase 1 (in no particular order) :

- Build locomotive servicing and storage facility at Sedgfield (I believe there is land available nearby) covering the following facilities:
 - o Locomotive inspection pit.
 - o Locomotive shed for secure storage of locomotives.
 - o Storage shed for coaches
 - o Coaling and coal storage facilities.
 - o Water supply
 - o Staff facilities toilet, mess room, etc.
 - o Ash pits and ash disposal.
- Rehabilitate the railway line between Sedgfield and Wilderness. Not sure what is required.
- Setup watering facilities at Sedgfield and Wilderness.
- Establish booking facilities; suggest use local tourist info etc. To handle bookings.
- Employ fulltime staff. I would try and keep fulltime paid staff to a minimum and use contractors wherever possible.
 - o Drivers and firemen. Need at least two sets of permanent footplate crew.
 - o Train manager and coach controllers
 - o Coach cleaners
 - o Labourers to maintain facilities.
 - o Fitters (see volunteers section)
- Identify local firms that can provide the services to the railway, for example:
 - o Maching and other engineering services
 - o Carpentry for coach maintenance
 - o Permanent way bush clearing
- Setup Safety Management System and get Rail Safety Regulator certificate to operate.
- Appoint boiler inspectors
- Recertify GB and GF for operation.
- Setup a volunteer organisation to support the railway.
 - o This organisation should give opportunities for people to be involved in the train operation, locomotive maintenance, coach maintenance and foot plate staff.
 - o I know of a few people in the area who have locomotive maintenance experience in preservation bodies so instead of employing elderly ex Spoornet fitters you might look at employing trainee fitters use the people who have preservation experience to train and mentor them.
 - o It is critical that the commercial management respect these volunteers. In the past THF saw volunteers as free slave labour to do the work paid staff did not want to do, for example cleaning toilets.
 - o In running a railway one of the largest costs is labour, so if you can get volunteers to help they will help save costs, give additional capacity and they normally are productive than paid staff.
- Contract Reefsteamers as technical and operational consultants. Reefsteamers have a reputation for technical excellence and have been recently appointed as technical consultants for the Sandstone Trust collection.
- Relocate locomotives and coaches by road to Sedgfield depot. This can be done in stages for example move GB and two coaches to get the service running.



Courtesy of Dick Manton
10CR Lorraine Loading Ore

Phase 2

Objective: - To rehabilitate the section between Sedgfield and Knysna. This will allow a service between Knysna and Wilderness.

Locomotives: - By installing turning facilities as Sedgfield you can use straight locomotives such as class 19D and 24.

Steps required for implementing phase 2 (in no particular order) :

In Phase 1 you have put all the infrastructure in place to operate the railway and maintain the equipment. This phase will involve the following:

- Rehabilitate the section between Sedgfield and Knysna. This includes any work to get the Knysna station operational again.
- Install turning triangle or turntable at Sedgfield or at Wilderness if a location is available nearby. Knysna already has a turntable.
- Recondition some additional locomotives of class 24 or 19D to work the additional section.

Phase 3

Objective: - To rehabilitate the section between Wilderness and George. This section of track will cost the most to fix and require the most ongoing maintenance. Also in the past the passengers complained that the trip from George to Knysna was too long and many either went George – Sedgfield or Knysna – Sedgfield. So in practical terms not sure how much additional tourist revenue this section would generate for the large investment required to get it operational again. Of course if you could get a freight contract that made it economically viable to open the line through George then it would make sense.

Another South African Sunday Times article talks about private investors being invited into negotiations regarding the future of the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe and yet The Times in the UK seems to think it is game over.

SIA has taken the matter up with the Western Cape Government.

"Business in talks on Choo-Tjoe

2009/06/04

Cathy Dippnall GARDEN ROUTE CORRESPONDENT dippnallc@avusa.co.za

Choo-Tjoe damage is huge blow to tourism MEC steams closer to Choo-Tjoe rescue plan Threatened closure of iconic steam train staved off for three more months Zille promises to find a way to put Choo-Tjoe back on track

PRIVATE investors could soon be invited into negotiations regarding the future of the iconic Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe train.

Western Cape Finance, Tourism and Economic Development MEC Alan Winde said yesterday he was in advanced talks with Transnet and hoped to get finality on the issue soon.

He said he would invite expressions of interest from the private sector.

George MPL Marius Swart told a press conference that private investors would be invited to tender for the Choo- Tjoe in the next three weeks.

However, Winde said he would first like to call for expressions of interest before calling for tenders.

"We need to convince Transnet of a public-private partnership. We should not dictate, but rather facilitate and ask business people to come up with viable propositions and see what happens."

Winde said part of the negotiation with Transnet entailed making the two business studies paid for by government available to the public.

"We want the go-ahead from Transnet to make the studies public.

Then the documents can be used by anybody who wants to use them in making a business plan."

Winde agreed with Transnet`s decision to get back to core business.

"Why should they keep going? They are losing money and at the end of the day none of the routes are viable as they stand."

He suggested that investors and interested parties come up with suggestions that could include plans to run part of the line from Knysna to George, George to Mossel Bay or to the George Airport. Job creation projects and "added-value" proposals such as hiking and biking trails could also be considered.

"There is a lot at stake as there is the repair of the line (Knysna to George) to consider, fixing up rolling stock and maintaining the lines, which have deteriorated."

He said he would like to see expressions of interest from a broad spectrum of parties which could ultimately lead to a collaborative effort from various entrepreneurs working together to make the Choo- Tjoe viable.

According to Swart, interest had been expressed by the Waterval Boven Steam Train Society, which runs a successful private line in Mpumalanga, while two Southern Cape businessmen, Lynn Schroeder and Sal Marsilio, have offered their expertise in facilitating the public-private partnership.

"There are several people interested in investing in the Choo-Tjoe, including the operators of the steam train running in the Waterval Boven area, which is profitable and has the backing of the local population," Swart said.

Although Schroeder and Marsilio are retired, they said they would use their expertise to lobby for support from the business sector.

"We need to get business and financial projections as soon as possible," Schroeder said.

Another possible investor is African Power Technologies, which is exploring a multimillion-rand foreign-funded waste gasification plant in the Southern Cape.

Chief executive Jan Vingerhoets said part of the proposal to Eden District Municipality was to help fund the repair of the line between Knysna and George. The rail line could then be used to transport waste to the gasification plant.

The line was damaged in landslides at Kaaimans Pass during floods in 2006 and estimates for repairing the line and refurbishing the coaches put the cost at R130-million."

Stop the Press!

We have just received the attached.

Well done to Advisory Board member, Andy Selfe, for maintaining this dialogue.

----- Original Message -----

From: "Alan Winde" <Awinde@pgwc.gov.za>

To: "Andy Selfe" <aselfe@mweb.co.za>

Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 7:04 AM

Subject: Re: Fw: Another article

"Good Day Andy

I have sent all the documentation to the CEO of Transnet and they have agreed to meet on the matter. I am led to believe that this will be some time this or next week.

If at the meeting I can get agreement that Transnet will become a partner in a PPP or the like, I will ask the public for expressions of interest and take it from there. I have every reason to believe that a solution will be found as many interested parties have expressed their interest it invest it this Icon.

I trust this is in order.

Regards
Alan Winde"

APPEAL TO ARMS: We would greatly appreciate it if Steam in Action members could e-mail Alan Winde (Awinde@pgwc.gov.za) helping him to develop a perspective as to why the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe is an icon that South Africa cannot afford to lose.

Appeal for Assistance

Ashley Peter, representing RSSA Natal and the Umgeni Steam Railway, has sent forward the following information regarding saving the locomotives currently at Hilton. Apparently they need to be moved urgently from Hilton to Masons Mill in Natal.

The approximate estimate of moving these locomotives is as follows:

(i)	Temporary reinstatement of the vandalised track between Hilton and Cedara:	R50 000
(ii)	Movement of four locomotives and steam crane by rail from Hilton to Mason's Mill:	R76 572
(iii)	Crane and movement of three locomotives by road from Hilton to Mason's Mill:	R120 000
TOTAL:		R246 572

The locos in question are as follows:

Qty 2 x Class H2 locomotives – No. 314 which belongs to THF and No. 329 which belongs to RSSA Trust
Class 1 locomotive No. 1276 belongs to RSSA Trust
Class S2 No. 3778 belongs to RSSA Trust
Class 19AR No. 696 belongs to THF
Class 19B No. 1402 belongs to USR
Class 15AR No. 1963 belongs to USR
Sheldon & Cowan 36-ton crane, No. 184
Ex ERP North British 4-8-4 Industrial Tank Locomotive
Assortment of wagons DZ's and shorts

SIA Advisory Board Member Activities

Advisory Board member Oscar Sabatini has been trying valiantly to generate a response on the important subject of the illegal scrapping of Heritage items. His latest letter is below.

The CEO
Mr. V. Kahla
Transnet Freight Rail
Johannesburg

56 Ophelia Street
Herlear
Kimberley
8301

8 June 2009

REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK ON THE SCRAPPING OF TWO STEAM CRANES IN BEACONSFIELD

Dear Mr. Kahla and Ms. Mabie,

I have been requested to liaise with you on behalf of Steam in Action, to enquire as to what progress has been forthcoming as to the enquiry about with the two steam cranes in Beaconsfield, that were scrapped without authorisation.

Irrespective of how much blame can be proportioned; nothing can bring these steam cranes back. Also, as a Government employee myself, it appears that the proper adherence to the correct disposal procedures was not implemented by Transnet. Again rather than request the Auditor General's office for an investigation, I think we must assume that as is so often the situation, human error was to blame. Thus the question that really needs to be addressed is not so much who was the official responsible, but rather, what best can be done to improve a difficult and awkward situation?

I believe that what is now required is to find an acceptable solution that will try and address the situation to the satisfaction of all role players, rather than conduct a 'witch hunt'.

If Reclam were in fact responsible for the destruction and disposal of the two steam cranes without official permission from Transnet, this was achieved without payment to Transnet. However, Reclam has paid Transnet for the steam crane at De Aar, which they would now also like to cut up for scrap.

Therefore would it not be possible for Transnet to request the return of the De Aar steam crane, by Reclam, in exchange as compensation 'payment' for the two steam cranes that were cut up illegally in Beaconsfield?

Transnet, as an act of 'good faith' could then donate the De Aar steam crane to Steam in Action, for preservation.

I believe that one of the two steam cranes in Beaconsfield was actually the subject of negotiations between the local Kimberley preservation group, Steamnet 2000, and Transnet. Furthermore these negotiations were proceeding 'in good faith' while the crane referred to was actually being cut up.

It must also be realised that any artefact over sixty years old, such as these steam cranes, can not be disposed of unless permission from SAHRA, the South African Heritage Resources Agency, or its successor PHRA, the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority has been forthcoming. Thus it is doubtful if this agreement had been forthcoming at the time of their disposal, which only serves to complicate the legality of the matter further.

As this is such a delicate situation, with the possibility of legal action being taken, from various perspectives, I would urge Transnet to consider this suggestion seriously as a means of extraction from an extremely difficult and potentially embarrassing situation.

I see this option as a means whereby Transnet finally receives the financial compensation for the loss of the Beaconsfield steam cranes; while those who were responsible for the scrapping are 'let off the proverbial hook' as far as legal action is concerned and that at least one steam crane is saved and donated for preservation by Transnet.

Thus I earnestly urge you to consider this option, as a means of defusing a potentially, extremely damaging situation, for the well being of all concerned.

Kind regards,

Dr. Richard Sabatini
Steam in Action Advisory Board Member

Transnet: The Scrapping Continues

See links:

- Sale 1: <http://www.go-dove.com/Auctions/AuctionDetail.asp?AuctionID=13221>
Sale 2: <http://www.go-dove.com/Auctions/AuctionDetail.asp?AuctionID=13223>
Sale 3: <http://www.go-dove.com/Auctions/AuctionDetail.asp?AuctionID=13224>
Sale 4: <http://www.go-dove.com/Auctions/AuctionDetail.asp?AuctionID=13225>
Sale 5: <http://www.go-dove.com/Auctions/AuctionDetail.asp?AuctionID=13226>
Sale 6: <http://www.go-dove.com/Auctions/AuctionDetail.asp?AuctionID=13227>



Courtesy of Dick Manton
NGG16 Leaving Izingolweni

SIA MEMBER COMMENT:

From: Rollbahn [mailto:rollbahn@vodamail.co.za]
Sent: 22 June 2009 00:00
Subject: Re: Major on line Scrap Sale: viewing dates

"Hi, I have spent an hour or 2 perusing relevant areas of this auction. Finally accessed running number lists/flysheets, through clicking [amongst others] "lot catalogue" and "download doc".

I only accessed lists that could affect us here in Kly. I.E. lists 2 & 6. Fortunately nothing we have or have eye on is listed. Northern Cape is entirely Noupoort. I note bidding of wagons there slightly less than at Bloem appx R10,000 each or less. mainly DZ,s and flats.

Bloems lists include rakes of DZ/FZ/FP/O/O1/O3/OA1/XBJ/QAJLA3 etc.[usefull for charter freights/coal storage?] bidding at R12,000-R14,000 per item. locations are shown such as "boggel" [hump yard] and so its easy to pick out those in "loco" which are all diesels.

Of note/concern is lot 37 of 29 coaches at a time when so many clubs are struggling to obtain any. The opening bid is R500,000 about R17,000 each. Many types of M L coaches inc those in number series,s 39xx,252xx,221xx,210xx

However No 4543.... sounds old/rarish? anyone with more coach knowledge than me should comment."

Mocambique

We received a query to say that the line and the locomotives in Xai Xai were being cut off. We immediately contacted CFM who came back with the reassuring comment below:

"Many thanks for your mail of yesterday. Please be calm as the referred 3 steam engines and the workshop in Xai Xai are well secured and not for cut. What your friend might have heard is just cheap talking or it is the intention of someone and he is just trying to see the reaction.

Once again, many thanks.

*Best regards,
Adelino Mesquita
Executive Board Director CFM"*

HRASA

Perspective of the Future

A HRASA PERSPECTIVE OF THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS, written by
Chris Janisch, Acting chair, HRASA, 22 June 2009

"The steam preservation industry certainly faces extremely stiff challenges in the future. Difficulties in dealing with Transnet, government and other related bodies, lack of support from members and lack of transparency from governing organisations have all taken their toll. In the midst of all this, the heritage items dispersed around the country have continued to deteriorate and many have been scrapped or are unrestorable.

The reason for the founding of SIA was to revert this situation. The attempts made by SIA to work with HRASA generally failed, mainly due to lack of communication and personality clashes. The relationship between HRASA and Transnet Foundation also failed simultaneously.

The Millsite issue brought our predicament into sharp focus. It showed that there was a lot of support for the preservation of SA rail heritage, and also that we could not get our act together. Transnet have now insisted that unless we perform on dealing with the donated stock, they will not entertain any further lend-lease, and in fact will be unlikely to take our movement seriously. CAPACITY is the key word here- capacity to plan as a team, and capacity to do the job

It was with the obvious crisis facing the organisation that the HRASA BoD instituted changes earlier this year. Since then, there has been a rekindling of the relationship with TF, approaches to Transnet itself and other bodies like PRASA, and a willingness to join forces with SIA. HRASA sees itself as the legally constituted representative body of heritage preservation in SA. SIA is the promotional and tourism wing, which can lobby for hands-on, financial and other support which we so desperately need. HRASA has proposed to SIA that we work together, and now await from them a counter-proposal. Of pressing importance here is the need to perform on Millsite. Further funds must be raised, and support staff are needed to assist.

The ranks of people willing to get properly involved in the heritage industry are constantly thinning. The hundreds of visible supporters in the 1970s have been reduced to a trickle. Clubs and associations are being staffed by a small handful of devotees who cannot go it alone forever. If there is one call to be made on all SIA supporters, let it be: MAKE YOURSELVES AVAILABLE TO ASSIST. We need all ranks of people who could each make a difference in a small way. If we can get this together, there is hope that heritage rail will have a future in SA. It will not be easy and our success may be limited by bigger factors, but if we can keep doors open and work hard, the wheels will keep on rolling into the next few generations.

There has been much talk of appeasing Transnet and not taking them on more aggressively. In our opinion it is dangerous to act in such a manner. We are frustrated by the situation which has been allowed to develop, but must take into cognisance that we are guests on the railway, which has very different priorities to ours. It is a measure of some satisfaction that the presence of heritage trains on the network has been tolerated, and in fact there are signs that Transnet accept and encourage such operations, within the limits imposed by themselves. We can only hope that by showing the benefit of our work, such as tourism and job-creation, as well as service to the community, that our influence can increase with time. Of course, this can only be achieved through buy-in from all associated bodies and individuals.

HRASA stands at a crossroads now, and a workshop discussion will be held by its members at the AGM on 27 June. Plans for the future will become clearer after this, but restructuring and then support are necessary for the new HRASA to work. We again make a plea for unity and assistance at this difficult time."

SIA COMMENT: The logistical issues which blocked access to Millsite and which have been documented ad nauseam have never been addressed by Transnet. It is the Government parastatal that is blocking access... not HRASA or SIA. HRASA's job is to generate the documentary authority required before anyone can move on site. Unconfirmed reports just in state that the previous Board of HRASA has been re-elected more or less unchanged, which probably means that the impasse regarding Millsite will continue. These were the same people who refused to deal with the logical obstacles that existed then and still exist now.

Activity Report Last month, we published HRASA's Activity Update in our May newsletter. Please see our comments below.

SIA COMMENT: Thank you for forwarding us a copy of your "Activity Update," there does seem to be more activity in this document than what we have ever seen since the inception of HRASA.

We still fail to see any mention of the most important action that needs to be taken by HRASA at this stage, and that is to get steam re-instated on running on the main lines. Transnet caught you all with your pants down in the later "Modified" version of the MOU, where the wording "CORE LINES" was changed to MAIN LINES." This effectively blocked off any running of steam trains on the main lines in future. This is as a direct result that the contents of the document was not given due consideration and were signed blindly by HRASA.

One further comment of yours where you say that "Relations with Transnet Freight Rail remain stable, and the current operators continue to run successful programmes." Who fed you this Bulsh*t, nothing of the sort is happening at the moment. We can't even get copies of the original steam exit plan; the original MOU and the later "Modified" MOU. Transnet are going out of their way to make it as difficult as possible to run on the main lines again. Even HRASA has been unable to assist us with the request for certain documents. This is despite several reminders to your good offices.

We think that you are too soft with these guys, you try to be friends with everybody, but this does not work in a business environment. You need to stand up for your rights, and not get trodden on which is what is currently happening.

You have become a tool in their hands, as you just allow them to steam roller you. You need to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and attack the real issues with vigour and determination.

On 5th June 2009 the following was sent to the Secretary of HRASA but we have received no response:

"The SIA members will be asked how they want to proceed in due course. It would be helpful if HRASA could give us a detailed document on how you view the future and how you see the relationship working with SIA which can be presented to the members so that they can make a decision on how they would like to proceed as individuals or as a collective. In the event that they support HRASA's new vision for preservation in South Africa then all functions within SIA can easily and instantly be taken over by HRASA if necessary. You can rest assured that in our individual capacities we will be totally co-operative in ensuring that the transition is made as easy as possible. We have absolutely no reason whatsoever not to see the new revitalised HRASA succeed."

The above would have of course been conditional on HRASA establishing themselves as a credible organisation.

Looking Back It is often interesting to look back at the very substantial paper trail that SIA has developed on a number of subjects. When our members read what is happening with respect to HRASA they possibly need to put into in perspective.

Attached are two items which were generated 6-months ago and 12-months ago.

From: Mike Myers [mikem@sandstone.co.za]
To: crea; Mark Robinson
Subject: A look back at 2008

Sent: Thu 2008/12/18 10:59 PM

Dear Mark,

Joanne sent me the response that you forwarded to her after you received the Steam in Action Christmas card. After a long period of zero replies to our urgent communications your response came as a great surprise.

I am not really a steam enthusiast at all. I run a business that happens to have a Heritage division and I concern myself with the business model, budgets and what we can afford and not afford to do and I only provide a Sandstone Heritage Trust point of view.

You are already aware that Wilfred has washed his hands of most of this, which I do not blame him for and which I think is a good move on his part. My personal point of view is that he has never received the recognition he deserves for the effort, time and money he has put in trying to save some of South Africa's rail heritage for future generations. His generous and unselfish contribution has been nothing short of remarkable and I am sad for him because I get the feeling that what he has achieved may never be recognized.

His involvement in Sandstone is largely on the Agricultural side and you will undoubtedly see a substantial reduction in the activity level concerning our heritage operations. The lack of support for what we have been doing in the Railway Heritage sector has caused the Trustees to completely rethink their position and of course from a budgetary standpoint I no longer allocate funds for things that we previously might have done. In fact I am currently reviewing all the operations in great detail and plan to make some major additional changes early in the New Year.

We were very committed to working with HRASA at the beginning of this year and we were prepared to make resources and funds available to try to help achieve a more broadly based and we believe honourable objective. However, I was very much taken aback by the prickly reaction to anything that I considered to be businesslike. In order to achieve a joint objective with other organizations - in this case HRASA and the Transnet Heritage Foundation - one needs an element of goodwill but there was none. From many years of business experience I see no point in entering into relationships where there is a lack of respect for what we have been trying to do, a lack of interest in what we might be able to contribute and a lack of trust in us as individuals.

I have always been very careful to ensure that everything that we have done is legal, is on the right side of corporate governance in all cases, and is entirely capable of sustained review or audit. In other words, had we found ourselves in a similar position now and had we had the will to move forward then we would have done and said the same things. Circumstances including the global economic meltdown have however influenced our thinking somewhat.

Moving thousands of tons of steel is a massive logistical exercise and I believe that the role that we might have been able to play was not fully understood from the beginning. Perhaps the powers that be thought that we never did have the knowledge, management skill, money or resources to do the job in the first place but I expect that is their prerogative to take that view. Turning to HRASA my observation is that there has been a failure of diplomacy. You had many willing people queuing up to help but for some reason you never acted as the coordinator or industry leader who could under your management guidance unite all the different elements into a centralized and unified operational response unit which could sensibly decide who would do what in the greater interests of Railway Preservation in South Africa.

Your abbreviated response does not say what you would like to talk to us about in 2009. Perhaps you have a vision for 2009 which you can share with everyone. I would point out that there are some committed organisations like Reefsteamers who I am sure would still step forward at this late stage and do what they can to assist you but obviously they must speak for themselves.

Finally, I was involved in the formation of SIA and I want to say that it was a genuine attempt to engage the international community and to bring the bigger players together in some sort of unified body which could partner anyone, including yourselves, Transnet etc. to assist with achieving what we thought at the time were honourable objectives. There appeared to be some resentment towards SIA right from the very beginning and for some strange reason it was considered a threat. The knee jerk reaction to its creation and the way in which it was described as a waste of time was incredibly naïve because no one had the stature to stand back and see what it was capable of doing before they passed judgement on it. There are now just on 700 active members worldwide, a few of whom are offering to buy locos and assist in any way they can.

Unfortunately we are not the coordinating body so we cannot respond to the initiatives which come from some extremely well meaning and substantial people in the body corporate of SIA itself.

SIA is more than a year old now and while we had optimistic expectations of our ability to build something meaningful it actually surpassed all our expectations in terms of the response that we received from so many well meaning people. To my mind Transnet and HRASA's decision to lock SIA out of the broader picture has in fact effectively dealt a death knell to what could have been a globally supported, internationally coordinated and locally supported steam railway rescue initiative.

Undoubtedly this e-mail will initiate the normal flurry of indignant e-mails telling me that I do not know what I am talking about. I have served on many industry bodies in my lifetime and my experience with Rail Preservation is that people generally react emotionally and are not always informed as to what is really happening in the broader sense or on the ground. The task is difficult and it will need people of considerable stature and great resources to rescue it.

One day when you think back on Sandstone Estates and the Sandstone Heritage Trust it might occur to you that it did at a certain moment in time have a contribution to make but for the reasons mentioned above it never stood a chance of making any meaningful impact.

I wish you and your family a restful and festive season and all the very best for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Michael C. Myers
Sandstone Heritage Trust.

From: Mike Myers [mailto:mikem@sandstone.co.za]
Sent: 20 June 2008 12:20 PM
Subject: The Way Forward

AN OPEN LETTER TO HRASA.

IT IS TIME TO CONSOLIDATE AND TO SUPPORT THE HERITAGE RAIL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA (HRASA)

It is very obvious that Mark Robinson is struggling under an immense burden of administration and responsibility and is coming under a lot of pressure.

While Mark sometimes objects to the fact that other people have contact with Transnet, he forgets that Transnet is a multi-divisional organisation dealing with Commercial Rail freight, properties, pipelines, and a whole host of other activities which go far beyond the very tiny world of steam preservation. For example some members hold leases to their premises which force us to have contact with them.

There are many people who interact with Transnet at the highest level for reasons which have nothing to do with HRASA and in so doing we are able to from time-to-time bring the Heritage subject up. Generally speaking there seems to be a good understanding of the need for a strong Rail Heritage programme in South Africa and the importance of ensuring that Transnet can talk to people at their level about issues that concern the national interest.

It behoves all of us who are conscientious about the future of Steam in particular to assist Mark. In our opinion the best way to assist Mark is to ask him to reconsider his position as Chairman, possibly accept the post of Deputy Chairman, and allow someone to come in who is a top line executive with resources at his disposal. What we mean by resources are intellectual, administrative, legal, financial etc. Such an individual has stepped forward in the form of Errol Ashwell.

It is also apparent that Mark does not operate on the basis of delegation. The Chair of HRASA should command the following resources:

1. A competent firm of accountants who can produce accounts regularly and on time. The AGM has been delayed because there are no accounts and a competent audit firm would produce those accounts in less than a week.
2. To establish and manage a proper web site. It is unthinkable that in the modern age an organisation like HRASA should be without a web site through which they can communicate with the world.

3. Access to strong marketing facilities. HRASA's membership should be measured in hundreds if not thousands by now. Steam in Action achieved a membership of over 600 in less than 6-months and it is still growing. This is exactly the same captive audience that HRASA should have addressed. We fully appreciate the cost involved and we sympathise that Mark probably has not had the fundraising and membership recruitment experience that is necessary. HRASA must approach the market in exactly the same way that the head of Fundraising at UCT Cape Town would approach their Alumni with the challenges of collecting funds. It is a skilful business and it is not to be taken lightly.
4. Secretarial resources. There must be secretaries, IT specialists, and people with real skills available at the drop of a hat to assist HRASA. This is not to say that HRASA needs those things that often but if the Chair of HRASA and the Directors if they wished to carry out their functions competently would inevitably have these resources at their fingertips. It is not unusual to receive a letter from the Chairman of the Board of Governors of a child's school which emanates from Anglo-American Head Office. Top people do not just work; they are involved in philanthropic, charitable and industry related bodies such as HRASA on an ongoing basis. In fact it is unusual if they are not involved in some way.

What we propose is the following. The HRASA membership and the HRASA directors should avoid a situation where there is some sort of AGM punch-up to try and dislodge the Chairman. Because Mark's personality does not lend itself to strong delegation and team work, other than within a very small and passive group, it means that he has to be part of something that is bigger than he is and that is to be part of an executive team. Most key meetings are attended by Mark alone which creates the impression of an autocracy.

Mark has credibility in certain areas and no one disputes that, but that credibility is dissipated because of his inability to deliver due to his inability to bring any resources to bear.

Why doesn't Mark consider the possibility of a voluntary reconstruction of HRASA which involves the appointment of effective directors, the creation of a web site, and the establishment of the key corporate components that anybody in that position must have at his disposal in order to succeed? Many of the people who have struggled to get HRASA's attention are Chartered Accountants; IT experts etc., and have strong marketing skills which HRASA would get for free.

We have to ask ourselves whether HRASA is truly representative of the global pro South African steam membership that is potentially out there. Steam in Action came into being in order to try to compensate for the conspicuous lack of skills that HRASA was displaying. HRASA has treated Steam in Action as an invading force which is counter productive because SIA has exactly the same objectives, i.e. let's stop the government from cutting up National Heritage items.

Remember there are many threatened sites so we have only just begun.

Never forget that when Sir Winston Churchill was dissatisfied with the performance of the 8th Army in North Africa he replaced the entire high command under Field Marshall Montgomery. He went on to win the war.

It really is time to throw away one's petty likes and dislikes. There are people like Errol Ashwell out there who can make a positive contribution. In the interim they are being marginalised. Let's combine Executive Authority with current credibility before it's too late.

This document is being circulated in the interests of all Rail enthusiasts by The Sandstone Heritage Trust who takes full and sole responsibility for its content.

If you have a view, then vote yes or no for the concept by emailing the undersigned. We will abide by the majority decision.

If it is positive we will approach HRASA.

Michael C. Myers
Office Telephone: 011 805 4692
FaxEmail: 0866 148 453

SIA MEMBER COMMENT: No response was received to either of the above overtures.

Locomotives by Aidan McCarthy



Publicity

The media are definitely becoming more interested in Steam in South Africa and some very prominent articles have appeared during the past few weeks. This one by Paul Ash is particularly well written, which is not surprising bearing in mind Paul's knowledge and experience in Steam related issues.

In the wet winter of 2006, an avalanche of rock, mud and splintered trees thundered into the valley of the Kaalmans River and buried the spectacular George-to-Knysna railway under a mountain of debris.

A few kilometres eastwards, at Swartvlei, flood waters rose up and drowned the railway, washing away embankments and leaving the track hanging in the air.

As a temporary measure, the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe was diverted to the steeply-graded and far less scenic line between George and Mossel Bay.

Three years later, the railway is still closed, while engineers, consultants, government officials, railwaymen and local tourism operators tussle over its future.

The repair bill for the Knysna line is estimated at about R70-million and Transnet, the railway's owner, has had enough.

This is the second flood in a decade to close the line. In 2005, floods in the cutting above Victoria Bay carried off whole chunks of track. Trains were stopped for months while engineers repaired the track and attempted to redirect the river to prevent future floods.

The things that make the railway so attractive — the lakes it flirts with on its 67km journey, the high bridges over rivers and lagoons, and its steam locomotives — have proven to be its undoing. It was an expensive railway to operate, bleeding Transnet of around R850 000 a month, according to Garth Strachan, former MEC for finance, economic development and tourism in the Western Cape.

There are many cuttings and embankments, and seven major bridges. The steam locomotives are labour-intensive machines with voracious appetites for coal, oil and water — a load of good-quality coal for a single trip to Knysna costs about R3 000.

Transnet has vowed to shed all its "non-core" businesses — such as heritage operations and passenger trains — to focus on freight. Earlier this year, with the railway's future still hanging in the air like the ruined track over Swartvlei, it announced that the steam-hauled tourist train would cease running at the end of April. Thirty jobs, mostly fitters and locomotive crew based at the main shed and workshops at Voorbaai, would be lost.

Transnet's sour press release lit a rocket under Western Cape tourism officials and local operators, who reacted with alacrity and applied pressure to keep the train going. Transnet agreed to keep the steam train running until the end of June, in the hope that local government and tourism people could come up with a viable plan to save it.

In early April, Strachan said the Western Cape government had looked at various strategies to save the train and empower local communities at the same time.

"The Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe is a tourist icon in the province and we would like to save it," Strachan said.

The Western Cape government had appointed a consultant to investigate whether the line to Knysna could be repaired, how much it would cost and whether there was a viable business case for the railway. The report has still not been made public and, now that the national elections have swept the DA to power in the Western Cape, the Knysna line and the future of the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe has become someone else's headache.

Tourism operators and rail fans are hoping that Helen Zille's men will succeed where the previous lot of officials failed — to restore services to Knysna.

The new man in Strachan's hot seat is Alan Winde, who promises that the new government will do everything it can to save the tourist

THE BITTER END



GLORY DAYS: A Knysna-bound train steams out of the woods near Keytersnek. Floods later destroyed the railway

Blowing off steam

SA's official museum railway will close in June unless an operator with good credentials — and money — can be found, writes **Paul Ash**

train: "I will exhaust every avenue available to me to ensure that the Outeniqua Choo Tjoe will stay in operation as it is a special feature of the Garden Route."

But reopening the line is only part of the struggle. Tourist railways by their very nature are often marginal businesses with scant cash reserves.

Worldwide, even successful, heavily-patronised tourist railways depend largely on unpaid volunteers — engine drivers and firemen, cleaners, track-workers, ticket-sellers, conductors and people to staff platform tearooms and restaurants.

Track and locomotive maintenance is expensive, and, given the scale of the civil engineering works on the Knysna line, it is unlikely the railway will be viable without a subsidy. Looking after the bridges alone will require very deep pockets, and the floods that have wiped the line out twice in a decade are surely going to happen again.

It is, however, an opportunity to do things differently. Even since the railway became Transnet's museum line in 1991, it was run like a government department instead of a business. The tourist train has never run on Sundays — even in peak holiday season — and passengers were often treated as little more than self-loading cargo.

Making a go of the railway will mean hiring people who understand the tourism business to run and market the train, and reverse years of neglect and erratic marketing.

One solution being considered is a truncated operation between Wilderness and Knysna, which would allow for a more intensive service. A shorter route would also be more attractive to people looking for a short day out.

Either way, the railway is a valuable tourist attraction. In the right hands, it could be a boost to not only established tour operators, but also to the communities that live alongside the tracks.

WHY RAIL TOURISM MATTERS

People love riding trains for fun. Just ask the operators of Britain's tourist railways, which carried 13 million people last year.

What the British have also learnt from their heritage railways is the positive impact these have on other businesses, and on local employment.

Preserved railways generate jobs, says David Morgan, chairman of Britain's Heritage Railway Association.

"We worked out in the UK that every £6000 - 8000 earned by a railway will create another job," Morgan told a recent gathering of local rail preservationists at Sandstone Estates in the Free State.

Morgan said surveys done on the West Somerset Railway — one of the association's members — showed that for every £1 spent on the railway itself, another £10 was spent in the immediate region.

When floods inundated England in 2007, the Severn Valley Railway, which carries 240 000 people a year, was cut in 49 places and the railway closed for eight months. During that period of closure, 12 businesses went belly up — 12 businesses went into liquidation because of the drop in tourism, and I think that really confirmed everything."

Until the line to Knysna closed in August 2006, the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe carried about 115 000 people a year, all of whom spent money on food, accommodation and other activities in the area.

Morgan highlighted the example of the Harzquerbahn, a preserved railway in the Harz mountains in Germany. The network, which is entirely operated by steam locomotives, attracts more than a million visitors a year.

The German government, eager to promote this success story, gives the railway a €4-million subsidy each year.

"The value is evident — if you go down alongside the line, you see the very prosperous houses, people doing well, very successful and then if you go only 10km away from that, you see a lot of poverty," says Morgan. — **Paul Ash**

CNN provided useful publicity for Railway Preservation in South Africa with the attached clip under their Business Traveller section on 9th June 2009:

<http://edition.cnn.com/video/#/video/international/2009/06/09/mabuse.undiscovered.africa.cnn?iref=videosearch>.

On the subject of media publicity for Steam Tourism in SA, Reefsteamers once again did an excellent job in a 702 radio interview.
[Click here to listen:](#)

Steam Tours in South Africa

There has been quite a bit of correspondence during the last month or so regarding the David Rodgers tour. SIA has taken the position that they are not in a position to judge what actually happened now that so many different variations on why this tour was cancelled have come in. Suffice to say that the tour was fully booked.

In the meantime another UK touring company (www.geoffs-trains.com) have announced tours so visitors to South Africa will not be disappointed. Some recent photos courtesy of Aidan McCarthy.



Double header - Sandstone
Maluti Magic



NG15 with mixed freight - Sandstone
Maluti Magic



NG4 at Vailima - Sandstone
Maluti Magic

Feedback: Venerable Old Steam Cranes

The Sandstone Bloemfontein workshops are working on an ancient Grafton crane.

Phil Wragg from the UK has been very helpful in providing updated information on this crane.

For those interested click onto this link: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/A2A/records.aspx?cat=004-z844_xml&cid=-1&Gsm=2008-06-18#-1.

SPECIAL CREDIT: The information in the May newsletter was supplied by Chris Capewell.

Chris, thanks for the extremely useful information that you supplied.

Regional News

Reefsteamers Germiston

REEFSTEAMERS INVITATION COACH SERVICING PROJECT



"Dear Reefsteamers,

At our club, it is only natural that the glamorous but somewhat cantankerous steam locomotives get most of the attention, but the coaches need a little loving too! We are now entering the time of the year when we are not allowed to run steam trains because of the winter-time ban on steam. This ban is imposed because of the high fire-risk amongst the Highveld winter-dry fields and the long, dry grass at line side.

This is often a lean financial time for us as a club, as we have no source of income for over a month, but the bills must still be paid! On the other hand, we have found the enforced idle time to be a useful annual time to catch-up on our locomotive and coach maintenance. We can do bigger repairs without the rush of needing to have the machinery intact and running by 4am the following morning!

This year, our fleet of day-sitter coaches and the associated vehicles such as the water tanker(s) and the power van, are due for their service. It is actually a legal requirement that each rail vehicle must be inspected and thoroughly serviced every five years.

Thus, we request that those who normally work on board the trains, such as the Drivers, Firemen and especially the Coach Controllers, to come and help us out at the Depot with servicing the coaches during this idle time. Clifford Matthee will be overseeing the job as he is an expert in Carriage & Wagon work as well as railway safety – you will learn lots!

The work involves uncoupling the bogies from their pivots and then jacking the 40 ton coach up at one end and supporting it securely, leaving the bogies on the tracks. The disconnected bogies are then rolled out from under the coach, inspected and serviced. Meanwhile, the raised underside of the coach is also more accessible for servicing.

- 1). When the coach is lifted, the bogie pivot and its Vesconite wear pad are inspected.
- 2). The draw gear and the couplers are examined and lubricated.
- 3). The inter-buffer plates are examined and greased.
- 4). The entire brake system is to be greased, including the hand brakes.
- 5). The vacuum pans are removed – they are then stripped, cleaned and new parts are fitted.
- 6). Worn brake shoes are replaced.
- 7). Wheel bearings are examined and repacked with grease.
- 8). The wheels themselves are inspected and the gauge checked.
- 9). The whole coach undercarriage receives a thorough inspection. E.g. : Rust damage to floor pan, corrosion in the train vacuum pipe, loose brackets, wiring and cables.
- 10). When both bogies have been serviced and the coach is lowered onto its bogies once again, the mechanical links within the brake system are to be adjusted.

When the job is done, new dates are painted onto the outer chassis rails to certify inspection. New documents are signed by Clifford Matthee in his official capacity, giving our coaches a five year general road worthy certificate.

Shaun Ackerman, Andrew King and many of our regular fitters must continue their work on the locomotives, as Reefsteamers is dangerously short of traction power with only one locomotive (The Class 12AR) currently legally able to run. Thus, the coach servicing work must be handled by people other than the 'core' workshop crews.

We ask you to please commit yourself to joining in with this much needed project.

In order to get the work done in time for the new running season, we need to do at least two coaches or vehicles per day, so that means four can be done over a two day weekend.

All Reefsteamers members now have an opportunity to really become involved at the Depot and besides being depot work, it will be a sociable time with at least two teams of people working on a jacked up coach and the exposed bogie respectively. While some of the work is heavy, such as removing the vacuum pans, or fitting the timber baulking to support the jacked-up coach on the trestles, most of the work is relatively light duty.

As I receive more information, I will update everyone on what needs to be done and when.

Lee Gates – Club Secretary.

(On behalf of Shaun Ackerman – Vice Chairman.)”

Sandstone Heritage Trust

Sandstone completed a 4 year restoration of an ex Loraine gold mine 19D during June.

Class 19D Number 2654 Bloemfontein works June 2009. Photographs courtesy of Lucas Nel.



Friends of the Rail

As winter clutches the Highveld, FOTR have continued to build momentum with some big trains and events. The end of May saw a 15F-hauled Cullinan train, which ran in conjunction with another of our now famous photo galas. The gala began at Willem Prinsloo Museum, where a steam traction engine and a stationary engine were in use.

We then proceeded to Cullinan to photograph the departure of 3117, and were pleasantly surprised to see John Middleton out for the shots before rushing off overseas again. The photographers then visited the FOTR site at Capital Park for some late afternoon and night shots. Some great images were obtained as firemen, drivers and shedman moved around the locomotives doing their thing.

We had Class 24 3664 in steam too, and this loco performed the early morning shots around the depot, culminating in a trip up the coal stage.

All the attendees were most impressed with the event, and hopefully we will have attracted some more steam photographers. Great fun was had by all too!

Our 19D has had elements repaired and worked a train on Youth Day. The 15F then took up the reins again for a 600+ passenger Father's Day trip to Cullinan, which ran like clockwork. Our new PA system in the train is proving very useful.



We enter the quieter season now, and will start tackling the Class 24 motion repairs, as well as completing work on 3117, and installing a generator into the train.

Maintenance and improvements to the new Hermanstad site continue, and we will continue tracklaying in the near future.



**RSSA
Natal**

Dudley Smith has forwarded the following update:

"The Sisonke Stimela is an Economic Development initiative owned by the Ingwe Municipality with substantive support from the European Union Gijima Fund, the KZN Department of Local Economic Development, and the KZN Department of Local Government.

It comprises a steam-hauled passenger train consisting of locomotive GMAM 4074, seven refurbished luxury passenger coaches, a dining car and 2 lounge cars as well as a power/kitchen car. The intention is to provide a luxury passenger train journey linking Pietermaritzburg to the Sisonke District Municipality, more specifically Kwa Sani (Underberg) and Ingwe (Creighton). The coaches have been built at Capital Park by ROVOS Rail to their high standard of comfort and excellence. The train will be hauled by a fully restored GMAM 4074 locomotive currently being restored at Masons Mill in Pietermaritzburg by Umgeni Steam Railway.

It is the intention to commence operation early in 2010 with trial runs in 2009."



We also received the following update from Andy Anderson on the progress of the Sisonke Stimela GMAM 4074 Restoration Project.

[Click here to view PDF](#)

In addition Umgeni have an ex Free State loco, GF Garratt No. 2380, off the plinth at Frankfort. This loco is currently awaiting retubing & replacement of steam elements.

We thought that you might be interested to see the salvage operation of the fire engine from Hilton Station that we have just made.
(Submitted by Graham Gillett, Umgeni Steam Railway)



-----Original Message-----

From: Mike Myers [mailto:mikem@sandstone.co.za]

Sent: 26 May 2009 13:28

To: Susie.Mabie@transnet.net

Subject: FW: Emailing: The Allatsea Train Pages. SANRASM Museum in Randfontein.

Dear Susie,

It's a shame and a disgrace that our heritage should be treated in such a manner and it does not reflect well on the entire steam heritage preservation movement in South Africa.

Regards,

Michael C. Myers

Click here to view websitet: <http://www.allatsea.co.za/trains/sanrasmsouth.htm>

-----Original Message-----

From: fjoosthuizen@vodamail.co.za [mailto:fjoosthuizen@vodamail.co.za]

Sent: 01 June 2009 12:50

To: joannwest@btinternet.com

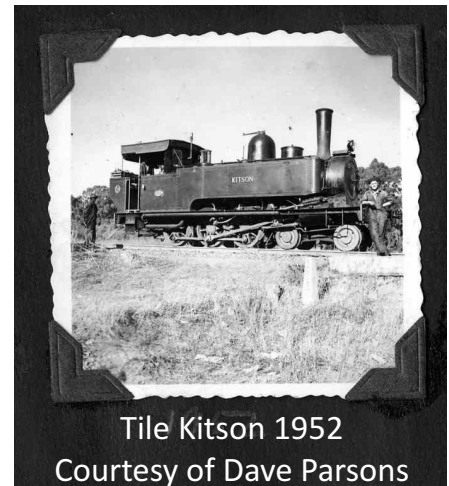
Subject: Steam in Action Contact

Importance: High

"Name: Francois Oosthuizen

email: fjoosthuizen@vodamail.co.za

Please contact me regarding SANRASM. Is it worthwhile to stay a member?"



Tile Kitson 1952
Courtesy of Dave Parsons

SIA COMMENT: Our personal view is that you should stay a member providing you make a difference. We would be acutely embarrassed to belong to an organisation like SANRASM and to allow so many good valuable locos to be actively vandalized and destroyed, apparently with the full authority of the SANRASM membership? It does not make sense to us.

Steamnet 2000

"Steamnet 2000 volunteers have after 4 months now [5/09] completed the current project to safeguard class 24 No 3654.



Since January 2009, most missing parts have been sourced, about 5 tonnes of old coal unloaded, the tender coal space scraped clean, treated with "russist" and a topcoat. To "cap it all"... and stop rainwater accumulation Annette, Judy and Andrew erected a world class shanty roof. William Higgo made cab door and window security gates assisted by his "labourer" [me] and all assisted in painting them. Steamnet 2000 is probably unique in that about 40% of hands on volunteer workers are ladies.

We have now returned our attention to boiler recertification of Lease Lend class 25NC No 3482.

We can also claim to have suffered no theft/tampering with our assets since 6/08. Some photos of our security lighting system next time.

Peter J Odell

Chairman - Steamnet 2000"

William, Judy and Annette with 3654 after completion of Cab Security 5/09

Jan Kempdorp

Oscar Sabatini, an SIA Advisory Board Member, has been very active with this. He reports that he sent documents to both Chris Janisch of HRASA and for the sake of good order an official one to Susie Mabie and is currently awaiting a response.

Archives

We received a query about the World Record that was achieved between Johannesburg and Cape Town on 13-14 August 1925 using the Union Limited. Ian Pretorius has provided the answers.

From: Ian Pretorius [mailto:ian@atlanticrail.co.za]

Sent: 05 June 2009 11:33

To: joannwest@btinternet.com

Subject: RE: Google Alert - South African Narrow gauge steam

"In August 1925 the original Union LTD ran from JHB to CPT with one loco 16D 860 in 29 hours a world record in those days. We preserved and restored 860 and used her many times on the modern UL a wonderful loco. She was later part of the Dal Josafat stable. The loco suffered a burst main steam pipe after I left and was staged, she is now stored a Cape Western Preservation Group at Epping. They don't want her and I hope that I can get her on lend lease and restore her to her formal glory.

Ian P"

Member's Feedback

From: Zena Penfold [mailto:zpenfold@iafrica.com]
Sent: 19 June 2009 09:22
To: joannewest@btinternet.com

"I am very pleased to make contact with you. I have an interest in the carriages at the Siding (not related to Ladybrand Station at all) that were originally sourced for Terry Fraenkel these are situated on the S708, off the N8 to Maseru Border. I have just taken over this development and believe it has attractive tourism potential, however the carriages are looking rather sad.

The interest regarding the Ladybrand station development has come more from discussions at Exec meetings as I am now the Chairman of the Mantsopa Tourism Forum! I believe that several proposals have been put forward over the years regarding setting up a Tourist route from Ladybrand, to Maseru, to Modderport to Tweespruit, etc but trying to find out what happened to these proposals and why they have not been implemented is like unraveling knitting!

Zena Penfold
Cell: +27 83 616 1094"

One of our members has forwarded details of an artist who has been concentrating on Steam Art. By looking at the GMAM Garratt (picture below) his work is excellent.

You can contact Paul Treleven direct at art@paultreleven.com.



From: pat@rotormotive.co.za [mailto:pat@rotormotive.co.za]
Sent: 11 May 2009 20:34
To: joannewest@btinternet.com
Subject: Steam in Action Contact

Tel: 031 7003511
Fax: 031 7001661

"We have contacted you in the past with regard to us offering our services, i.e. White Metal bearing repair etc. We have just been offered various Steam Pipe sizes suited to re tube boilers and wondered if SIA would be interested.

Pat Hyland"

SIA COMMENT: If anyone needs boiler tubes etc. please contact Pat.

Readers Request for Information

"Although I am resident in the UK, I have made several visits to South Africa primarily or exclusively to ride on and photograph your wonderful railway heritage, and so look forward to your regular monthly SIA newsletters.

Now retired, I spend much of my time volunteering on the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway <http://cms.whr.co.uk/> - the little WHR based at the western end of Porthmadog High Street.

There we currently have 3 locomotives with African associations, 'Karen', Peckett 2024 / 1942, ex Selukwe Peak Light Railway, Rhodesia, NG15 120, Franco Belge 2667 / 1949 and 'Gelert', Bagnall 3050 / 1953, ex Rustenburg Platinum Mines no 4.

Of these, the NG15 has just been sold for restoration elsewhere, and Karen awaits attention to boiler and firebox. Gelert is currently our regular steam locomotive.

We know very little about Gelert's history in South Africa beyond the most basic. By publishing this short message courtesy of SIA, I wonder whether any readers of SIA can offer any further information. Can anybody point us in an appropriate direction for further reading? How extensive was the 2 foot gauge system at Rustenburg? Are there any photographs of the Rustenburg system, and of loco no 4 or her sisters at work?

We would be very grateful for any information.

*Richard Harrison
Porthmadog, UK"*

*From: Rollbahn [mailto:rollbahn@vodamail.co.za]
Sent: 30 May 2009 16:08
To: joannewest@btinternet.com*

*"SIA,
Finally getting round to catching up on your last 3 newsletters. That's good news in edition 16 about SSR and Reclam, let's hope Reclam stick to their agreement. Also well done Daan for saving his steam crane! Check out p10, only 2 12A in the world??? 2111 at Millsite, 2123[SANRASM] at De Aar, this makes No3? And when are SANRASM going to fetch their 2 locos at De Aar??? I've been suggesting a temporary/safer home here at Kly to them for years, now they are no longer rail connected.
P J Odell"*

*"From: Quintin Clark [mailto:tazz@zulucom.net]
Sent: 24 June 2009 11:25 PM
To: mikem@sandstone.co.za
Subject: Steam preservation*

Good day

I recently found your website after many months. I have a passion for preserving old artefacts of any form especially steam and vintage vehicles.

I have information on a locomotive which according to the info I have from locals has been sitting there for a while it is rusted from what I can see from a distance as I pass it daily to and from work and thought maybe you with all your partners might be able to make contact with the relevant parties to acquire it for restoration as well as some others locos at the old defunct Hilton railway where approximately 14 loco are standing exposed to the elements . The first loco is standing on the track at cedara opposite cedara agriculture college

If you want you can make contact with me on 0828049036 and I will try to get photos of it for you to view . I have the enthusiasm for this sort of project but unfortunately not the finances if I could I would jump at the opportunity to be involved in any restoration project available.

Quintin Clark"

Below is a message we received from our Maltese SIA member, John Hili. Can anybody tell us about the locomotive?

----- Original Message -----

*From: John Hili
To: Andy Selfe SA
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2009 7:05 AM
Subject: Emailing: Train at Valletta Station c 1890*

*"Andy As for trains attached is an old photo of the only train we had in Malta. This photo was taken circa 1890 as the train was coming out of the Valletta station which was dug under the bastions!! To the left of the photo you can see the bridge / draw bridge for the entrance to our capital city. The train stopped working 1930, after that for a short while we had electric trams then came the buses who put an end to all up to this day!!
John"*



News from New Zealand

Kerry Young from New Zealand has as follows:

KIWIRAIL GIFTS TURNTABLE TO NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

"KiwiRail is playing a major part in ensuring that the National Railway Museum in Christchurch gets a turntable at its site at Ferrymead.

The turntable from the former Auckland Locomotive Depot in Quay Street, now deemed surplus to requirements, is being gifted to Ferrymead and KiwiRail is providing the transport to get it from Auckland to Ferrymead. The gift is part of a broader support package for the Museum's development, which involves donations in kind and advice. The opportunity was spotted by the Rail Heritage Trust's Executive Chairman, Euan McQueen who made the initial contact with Ferrymead and KiwiRail, and is working with KiwiRail's Gil Laing and Steve Muir on the transport arrangements.

"The museum is absolutely delighted," said Euan. "One of the design features of the museum is a roundhouse concept at the heart of the major display area. The turntable will be in the centre, with tracks radiating from it. This is an ideal way of maximising display areas in a limited space," he said.

Moving the turntable from its storage site at Otahuhu to Ferrymead is a challenging exercise. It will be partly disassembled, then loaded on to three rail wagons modified for this type of load for transport south over the next few weeks. "The Kiwi Rail team, both in Auckland and in ONTRACK's Wellington office, have all been really positive about the project" said Euan.

A copy of this has been sent to the Transnet Heritage Department suggesting that similar gestures in South Africa would be good for the country, good for our international image, and good of course for Rail Heritage."

Request for Steam Train Photos

Football for Fun Trust has asked for good quality steam train pictures. If any members would like to forward them direct the details are as follows:

John Haydock, E: john@footballs4fun.co.uk, Wwww: footballs4fun.org

Funds Contributed

The funds contributed are safely invested. Nothing has been spent and we will keep members fully informed. We will be in particular contact with the individuals who kindly sent us funds to save Millsite locomotives. If we are unable to deploy these funds for the purpose envisaged we will return the money to the individual donors.

Tourism Enquiry from China

From: XinSheng Zhang [mailto:citsjlp@public.cc.jl.cn]
Sent: 20 May 2009 01:52
To: joannewest@btinternet.com
Subject: Zhang, China

"Hello my dear friends,

How are you for the moment?

It has been several years that we have not been in touched and I hope you can get this message from me!

Tourism looks not so good this year due to the world-wide situation so now I have more time to sit down quietly to write to my old friends in my office!

You may probably know that I have my own company for 3 years called CHINA BY RAIL INTERNATIONAL - CBR International and one of the big part business in my company is still concentrating with organizing passengers to travel by railways in China!

And if you have time, you can visit our website www.cbrint.com.cn but on the website, it is mainly for the Chinese Travellers to go overseas for holidays!

Be in touch my friend and sending my best wishes
Zhang"

Preserving Old Locomotives Awaiting Restoration

We received the following from Roy Raats from Mason Mill:

"I enjoy reading all the latest news about steam in action. I have been putting old oil on all my locomotives at Hilton and Mason's Mill for the last 20 years, I also spray oil inside the fireboxes and smokeboxes on a regular basis. I even pour oil under the boiler logging. I have also found that pouring oil over the coal in the bunker gives very good smoke effects.
Roy Raats"

Models

Many SIA members are highly experienced and competent model makers. One of them is Hannes Paling. Here are some links for those interested in models:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/alfav8/sets/72157616790629682/>
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/alfav8/sets/72157611605711680/>
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/alfav8/sets/>

Useful Links

http://v24.railphotoarchive.org/rpc_intro.php

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/alfav8/sets/72157613292538107/>
http://www.rrdc.com/news_current.html

http://www.rrdc.com/RDC_Memorial_on_Merits_26062009.pdf

Sandstone Narrow gauge Railway: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alfav8/sets/72157616790629682/>

SAR steam locomotives: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alfav8/sets/72157610588281493/>

Small Lawey progress: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alfav8/sets/72157611605711680/>



Centurion Model Club Open Day

Advisory Board Members

For the record, your Advisory Board Members are as follows:

Andy Selfe (aselfe@mweb.co.za)
Oscar Sabatini (osabatini@mweb.co.za)
Lee Gates (leeg@leaf.co.za)
Phil Mortimer Snr. (pmtrucktrain@tiscali.co.uk)
Shaun Ackerman (fairlie@vodamail.co.za)

Chris Janisch (janisch24@gmail.com)
Errol Ashwell (errol.ashwell@eur.autodesk.com)
Mike Myers (mikem@sandstone.co.za)
Phil Mortimer Jnr. (imortim1@jhu.edu)
Wilfred Mole (joannewest@btinternet.com)

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Robin Taylor (rtaylor1@xsinet.co.za)

Steam in Action Information

OUR FOUNDING MEMBERS:

Reefsteamers: www.reefsteamers.co.za
Friends of the Rail: www.friendsoftherail.com
Sandstone Heritage Trust: www.sandstone-estates.com

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

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