



MALUTI MAGIC BULLETIN NO. 1

A VIP NG Steam Experience 2009
February 27, 28 and March 01

Greetings from Sandstone Estates.

22 January 2009

Things are hectically busy here at the moment. We have just finished combining 2,300 ha of wheat and we have switched the teams to haymaking and preparing the lands for our next wheat planting in July.

We would like to deal with the title for our event, i.e. "Maluti Magic". We were going to call our event "Bells and Whistles" but discovered that it had been used before. There is only one range of Maluti Mountains in the world as far as we know.

The running shed staff at the Narrow Gauge Railway at Hoekfontein had a meeting this week and we have prioritised all of them onto work which will ensure an interesting weekend over 28th February. We are pleased to advise that both our Decauville "Bathala" and our Wren Class locomotive "Little Bess" will be in operation. The guys have just completed some innovative engineering work in converting two very old and traditional Natal Sugar Cane wagons to two passenger carrying wagons for the small locomotives. We have always had a disparity between our normal South African Railways rolling stock which is fine behind the Garratts and the NG15 but which is a problem behind the smaller locomotives. We think the ladies in particular will enjoy the smaller more ladylike locomotives which these two definitely personify, particularly the French built Decauville.



Decauville "Bathala"

1942 Chev Quad



6C



Sena No 14 Peckett

Inevitably, the locomotive roster below will be modified because we do not want it to be particularly rigid. In fact even now we are happy to accept suggestions. Some of our VIP's have been to Sandstone before and so they know the ropes. The train movements are being worked out by Dennis Moore who is one of South Africa's pre-eminent railway photographers, and Dave Richardson who normally coordinates the logistics behind these special events. Both gentlemen bring a wealth of experience with them and I think they will do a good job of getting the best out of the railway for the weekend.

We are very indebted to Reefsteamers for making such a tremendous commitment to support us. We have vastly more locomotives than we have crews to operate them and so like most railways of this type around the world we rely heavily on volunteers. Because we are so far from any major urban area we do not have regular volunteers but what we do have are highly qualified, highly trained and certified drivers, firemen and fitters from the accomplished Main Line steam operators such as Reefsteamers. As many a dozen Reefsteamers regulars will be joining us

and we are grateful to them for their commitment and for sharing their knowledge and experience with us. Many people will be aware that Sandstone Heritage Trust has been moving many of their big Main Line locomotives to Reefsteamers in order that they may be maintained properly and used more regularly. These include David Shepherd's 15F, No. 3052, our GMAM Garratt No. 4079, as well as our own 25NC, No. 3488, and the still to be restored English Electric DE2 ex Rhodesia Railways.

Below you will find our initial programme for the weekend. The visitors fall into three groups. Firstly there are our VIP's who are intimately involved in many aspects of British Rail preservation. Amongst these is David Morgan who is Chairman of the Heritage Railway Association of Britain and Ireland and President of the European Federation of Museum & Tourist Railways. We are delighted that David and our other dignitaries and their wives will be joining us for the weekend. It will be a very select gathering so everyone should have an opportunity to meet each other.



1912 Emerson Brantingham Big 4 30



NG15 with Mixed Freight at Pandora



O&K 4102

The second category are our photographers. We have hosted hundreds of professional steam photographers over the years and have invited the best of the best to join us to capture the weekend. Among these is Ron Nell of Frameline who produces Sandstone's DVD's. Ron has agreed to do a small souvenir documentary on the weekend which will be of interest to our visitors because then they can share the experience with others who may not be joining us. Our photographers know the farm very well indeed. They are self-reliant and they will appear and disappear when it suits them. We would ask though that they please be extremely prudent about their movements. We have definitely had tranquil moments interrupted by a photographer driving foot flat down the road trying to catch the train or race to the next key photographic point. I have asked Dave and Dennis to be very aware of this.

This is a by invitation event only and to be fair the comments above generally apply to photographers who are not part of an organised group. Dave and Dennis have coordinated a number of special photographic run pasts which are specially for the photographers but if any of our VIP's would like to join them they are of course welcome.

The third group are our volunteers. These include the Reefsteamers team as well as a number of longstanding associates of ours. We plan to mobilise our Traction engines, our Sentinel steam lorry, some of our Classic Military vehicles, and other historic vehicles in order to provide the extra backdrop to the railway. These will not be used randomly. They will be programmed

to be in the right place at the right time so that the photographer can not only capture a Narrow Gauge railway picture but he may well be fortunate to see a road vehicle of similar vintage to the locomotive passing by. Once again we say thank you to all our volunteers for their tremendous commitment.

Finally, there are the staff from Sandstone and from our Bloemfontein workshop who will be there to ensure that things run smoothly.

OUR PROGRAMME IS AS FOLLOWS:

The volunteers will arrive during the week commencing Monday, 23rd February. They will be going through the items that have been chosen for the weekend to ensure that they are in tip-top operating condition.

Certainly by Friday there will be a lot of activity with many of these items being put through their paces and items which are in steam on Friday will be kept in steam throughout the weekend. Our VIP's will start arriving in the area on Thursday and are very welcome to spend a day with us on Friday. There is no formal programme for Friday daytime but this might be their best opportunity to experience what is happening "behind the scenes". We have a sundowner train ride on Friday evening which will stop somewhere on the farm under the Maluti Mountains so that people can have a drink, socialise and just enjoy the tranquil Highveld evenings that we are fortunate to enjoy at that

time of the year. Obviously thunder showers and other weather conditions might change our plans but the train will run regardless. Our VIP's will return to Clarens on Friday evening. Gerhard and Reinette Wille, our stalwart catering team who recently won an award for the best and most innovative Free State cuisine at the International Potjiekos Championships held in Slovakia, will be putting on a meal for the volunteers. If our VIP's would rather spend time with railway men and proceed back to the hotel a little bit later that will be fine.

The 45 min drive between Sandstone and Clarens is particularly beautiful and it is worth doing it at dusk if possible. However it is equally beautiful in the early mornings.

Saturday morning will see breakfast being laid on for those on the farm doing the work, and the VIP's are invited to join us whenever they would like. Protea Hotel in Clarens where all the VIP's are staying have asked for confirmation as to who will be having breakfast on Saturday morning. Our suggestion is an early breakfast and then arrival on the farm by 9.00am.

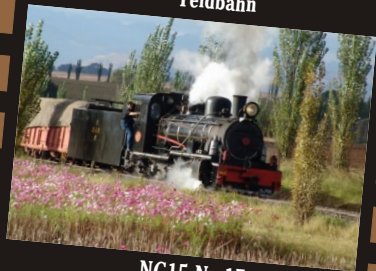


THE TRAIN SCHEDULE IS AS FOLLOWS:

DATE	DEP	ARR	LOCO	DRIVER	FIREMAN	GUARD	DESTINATION
27-Feb	17h00	18h30	NGG16 153	Henk	Derrick	Kevin	Hoekfontein-Grootdraai-Vailima & return
28-Feb	09h00	09h30	Feldbahn	Leon	Thinus		Hoekfontein-Grootdraai & return
	09h15	10h00	BR7	Henk	Wouter	RS	Hoekfontein-Grootdraai-Mooihoek & return
			NG97	Derrick	Kevin		Double header
	10h15	11h00	BR7	Henk	Wouter	RS	Hoekfontein-Grootdraai-Mooihoek & return
			NG97	Derrick	Kevin		Double header
	10h15	11h00	Feldbahn	Leon	Thinus		Hoekfontein-Mooihoek-Grootdraai- & return
	11h00	11h45	Fowler	RS	RS	RS	Hoekfontein-Mooihoek-Grootdraai- & return
	11h00	11h45	Avonside	RS	RS	RS	Hoekfontein-Grootdraai-Mooihoek & return
	11h45	12h45	BR7	Henk	Wouter	RS	Hoekfontein-Vailima & return
			NG97	Derrick	Kevin		Double header
			Hunslet	DR			Banking assistance
							LUNCH
	14h00	14h45	Peckett	Leon	Thinus	RS	Hoekfontein-Mooihoek-Grootdraai- & return
	14h30	15h30	NG15	RS	RS	RS	Hoekfontein-Vailima & return
	15h00	16h30	NGG13	Shaun	RS	RS	Hoekfontein-Grootdraai-Vailima Halt-Vailima & return
			113	Henk	Derrick		Triple Header
			153	Pat	RS		
	15h15	16h00	Peckett	Leon	Thinus	RS	Hoekfontein-Mooihoek-Grootdraai- & return
	15h30	17h00	NG4	RS	RS	RS	Hoekfontein-Grootdraai-Vailima Halt-Vailima & return
	17h30	18h30	NG4	RS	RS	RS	Hoekfontein-Vailima & return
01-Mar	05h40	10h00	NG15	Henk	Derrick	Wouter	Photo special Sunrise 06h02
			NGG16	RS	RS		Double header
	10h00	11h00	Little Bess				Hoekfontein-Grootdraai & return
			Decauville				Hoekfontein-Grootdraai & return
	11h00	11h30	O&K 2510	RS	RS		Hoekfontein-Grootdraai & return
			O&K 4102	RS	RS		Double headed
	11h30	12h00	Barclay	RS	RS		Hoekfontein-Grootdraai & return
	11h45	12h15	O&K 2510	RS	RS		Hookfontein-Mooihoek & return
			O&K 4102	RS	RS		Double headed
	12h15	12h45	Barclay	RS	RS		Hookfontein-Mooihoek & return



Feldbahn



NG15 No 17

On Saturday evening we have a relaxing farm meal preceded by drinks in the Waenhuis. Everybody is invited (VIP's and photographers). Drinks will be at 17h00 with dinner being served at 18h00, which means that our VIP's still get back to the hotel at a reasonable time, probably by 21h00. Once again we wish to stress how beautiful the Eastern Free State can be at this time of the year and one wants to savour it. There will still be locomotives in steam and for those who might want to have one last photographic trip or would like to just steam towards Lesotho with a drink in their hand that certainly will be an option.

We normally only operate our events up to lunchtime on Sundays but because of the number of locomotives that we would like to put through their paces we will in fact be working the full day on Sunday and again thanks to our volunteers for supporting us in these endeavours.

On Sunday morning breakfast will be served at the Waenhuis from 07h00 and again for those early birds who want to miss none of the action everyone is

invited. A light lunch will be served on Sunday at the Waenhuis and supper for the volunteers. We are anticipating that our VIP's will be weary and will probably want to get back reasonably early to the hotel because most of them depart early Monday morning.

The above will give you a good idea of what locomotives will be operating, approximately when they will be in steam, and what catering arrangements are in place to support the weekend. Our visitors are very mostly self-drive so they can come and go as they please.

Please note that the dress code for the entire programme is casual, including the Saturday night dinner.

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE WEEKEND ARE AS FOLLOWS:

On the farm if there is a rail-related issue please contact Dave Richardson, Cell: 082 447 9167.

If there is a farm related issue or an emergency contact Jurgens Dietrichsen on Cell: 083 212 5666 or Des Clarke on Cell: 083 2525 229.

The farm office number is 051933 2235 but will not always be manned.

Your hosts for the weekend will be Wilfred Mole, Cell: 082 991 1222,

Davin Mole, Cell: 082 990 7703, and Michael Myers, Cell: 082 992 1492.

SPECIAL NOTE: BLOEMFONTEIN

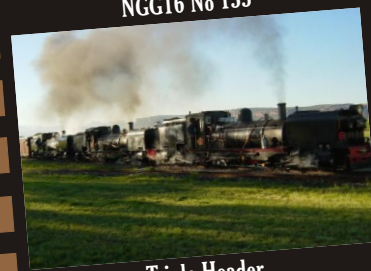
Lukas Nel and his team welcomes anyone who would like to visit the Bloemfontein workshops, either on the Friday or the Monday. Most of Lukas' men will be on duty on the farm on the Friday but Lukas and his wife Anna will be at the steam shed on Friday to receive a number of VIP's who are flying in to Bloemfontein. Should you wish to visit Bloemfontein please communicate with us and tell us the times so that we can make sure that the facility is open and that the security arrangements for you to gain access to the Sandstone Heritage Trust rebuild facility are in place.

GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING ISSUES:

1. Many people have contacted us regarding payment for meals. This is a VIP event hosted by the Sandstone Heritage Trust but of course like most preservation organizations we are always grateful for whatever income we can get. If you would like to make a contribution towards the catering costs you can do so when you arrive by



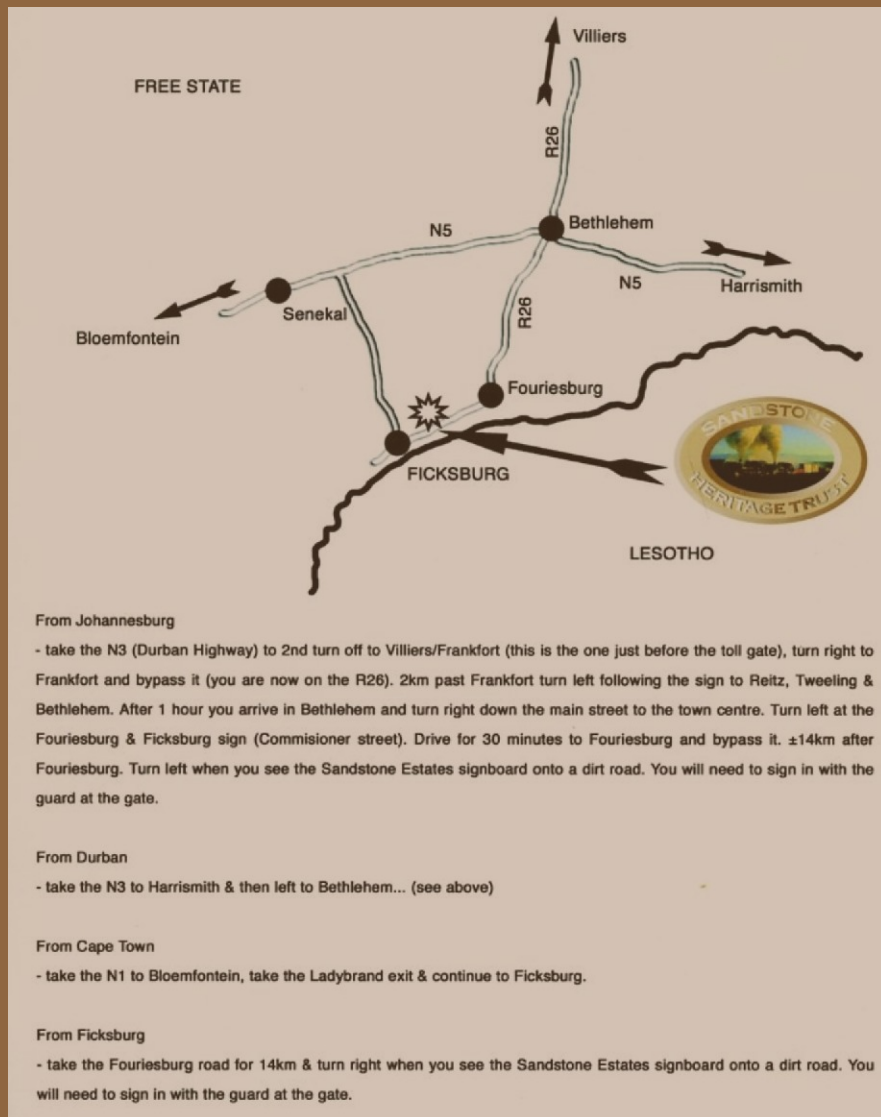
Mixed Freight under Vailima mountain
NGG16 No 153



Triple Header

talking directly to Hester Dietrichsen. Hester is due to have a baby between now and 28th February but she assures us that she will be in a excellent state to receive donations. Her cell phone number is 083 200 0014. You can reach her by e-mail at hesterp@sandstone.co.za. We would stress that we are not expecting our volunteers to make any contribution other than of their time, their expertise, and their goodwill.

2. Special Dietary requirements. I am sure everybody knows that the Free State farmers enjoy a robust diet, most of which involves meat in some form or another. If you have any special dietary requirements please e-mail Joanne West at joannewest@btinternet.com.
3. For those driving themselves to the farm, remember we are on the main road between Fouriesburg and Ficksburg (35-kms from Fouriesburg and 14-kms before you get to Ficksburg on the left hand side).



Photos credited to Dave Richardson, Wilfred Mole, Gary Barnes, Errol Ashwell, Hannes Paling and Tessa Joughin.

We may send out another bulletin or two but either way travel safely and we look forward to seeing you in the beautiful Eastern Free State. This photograph was taken this week but do not despair there are locos out there!

