



WELCOME to the October newsletter

Coincidentally as we were putting this newsletter to bed our thousandth member registered. We welcome Neville Simpson of New Zealand to SIA and congratulate him on being the thousandth member. A book registering this fact is on its way to him with our compliments.

BREAKING NEWS

Authority has been given to commence with the movement of all savable items from the SANRASM site at Randfontein. The first trucks are on site to start removing some of the smaller items. It is anticipated that this whole exercise will take many months. A substantially upgraded security presence has been arranged so that the entire site is guarded 24-hours a day until the exercise is complete.

Should SIA members wish to visit the site please e-mail Joanne West (joannewest@btinternet.com) and a coordinating SIA member will respond.

Photographs taken by Mike Dyke, SANRASM, on Thursday, 14th October. The removal of NGG11 to the safety of the Bloemfontein Steam Depot. Our thanks to Mike Dyke for the photographs.

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Photograph bottom right: The Sandstone team who carried out the first rescue at SANRASM Randfontein while the Chilean miners were being winched to the surface. Left to right: Manas - HGV Driver, Sandstone Estates, Wilfred Mole, Thabiso- HGV driver, Sandstone Estates, Izak - Sandstone Bloemfontein workshops, Leon - Sandstone Bloemfontein workshops, Lukas Nel - Sandstone Bloemfontein workshops, Charles Viljoen - Volunteer, Henry - Crain operator, Sandstone Heritage Trust.



No. 52 is in rehab in Bloemfontein... she will be here for 18 months. Photographs of the journey and the offloading at Bloemfontein taken by Lukas Nel.

Geoff Pethick has supplied the following information on the NGG11's.

Three NGG 11 Garratts entered service in the first batch in 1919, although it had been hoped to have them completed by Beyer Peacock by May 1916, they were order no. 01060. Presumably a little matter of World War I got in the way.

They were numbered 51, 52 and 53, Beyer Peacock Works Nos. 5975, 5976, 5977 of 1919. 51 and 53 were scrapped but 52 was sold to Rustenburg Platinum Mine and thus survives to this day and is being collected from SANRASM.

In 1925 a further two locos arrived nos. 54 and 55, Beyer Peacock Works Nos. 6199 and 6200 of 1925. Although to the same basic design they had piston valves and were superheated, unlike the original three which had slide valves and were unsuperheated.

No. 54 was the one at De Aar, later transferred to the Narrow Gauge Museum at Port Elizabeth, where it remains in the 'care' of the Apple Express.

No. 55 went to Weenen Station from where it was rescued, completely overhauled by Lukas Nel of Sandstone Estates in their Bloemfontein workshops, and is now with Patons Country Narrow Gauge Railway in Natal.

EDITORIAL - SECURITY

For those of us who have worked on the SANRASM situation over the past few weeks the realisation has developed that there is only one real overriding issue in South Africa at present with respect to Railway Heritage and that is one of security.

Break-ins often happen daily at preservation depots. The National Railways have virtually been brought to their knees as a result of cable theft and ongoing problems. The National branch line strategy is in tatters before it starts because half the railway lines that they wish to privatise have been stolen.

SIA has given careful thought to this matter and there is no question that we will eventually end up with a number of Railway Heritage fortresses. The common denominator between a safe and unsafe location is the quality of the security. The Sandstone Heritage Trust has a fortress mentality where locomotives are stored in lock-up steel buildings with electronic surveillance. Those buildings are in an area surrounded by a double electric fence and there are guards patrolling the inside and the outside perimeters of those fences. A third layer of guards works a kilometre or so away making sure that no one even gets close to the complex. This does not necessarily obviate the problem of internal pilferage by staff but again various surveillance methods are continuously being implemented.

Reefsteamers at Germiston have in association with Shongolola, the Sandstone Heritage Trust and SANRASM completed the implementation of a major security upgrade. This involves armed guards on duty 24-hours a day, electronic surveillance, and improved perimeter fencing. The costs are being shared by the various parties with a view to guaranteeing that nothing is taken from the depot.

The Bloemfontein Steam Workshops where the NGG11 has been transferred to from SANRASM is currently guarded by Transnet Security because it is part of the bigger Transnet Diesel Depot, and by a back-up security paid for by the Sandstone Heritage Trust who protect their specific working area in the old steam sheds. In addition, staff working at the depot are continuously alert to security issues.

A number of key locomotives in the National Collection are protected in this manner, and that is perhaps why there has been almost no change in their status for many years now.

If you own a locomotive in South Africa or if you are responsible for a locomotive then you have a very specific responsibility to either secure it or to negotiate with people who have already invested in the appropriate level of security to make sure that it is moved into one of these depots. SIA is continuing their investigations with a view to designating places which in our opinion have A grade security. Anything below that is unacceptable because it implies that there could possibly be a breach. We know from experience that we are not dealing with amateurs when it comes to stealing bronze etc., so the response has to be extremely robust. If guards are not armed then their presence is almost meaningless because the perpetrators of scrap theft are essentially militant and in many cases armed themselves.

We would greatly appreciate comment, recommendations, and thoughts from SIA members on the question of security. We are particularly interested in hearing from people who have experience in the area of Electronic Surveillance. Vibration sensors could possibly be fitted to locomotives which transmit silent emergency messages via GSM to a central control point. This would enable us to alert the owner of the locomotive immediately should something untoward be happening. However, unless there was an almost instant reaction time it is quite likely that by the time we were able to deploy some defence mechanism the damage would already have been done.

We do however believe that through the judicious use of technology we can make a difference.

Finally, we are engaging with both Transnet and with the South African Heritage Resources Agency on this very subject, i.e. there is no point in defining what needs to be kept for long-term Heritage purposes in South Africa if the ultimate decision regarding its survival lies in the hands of scrap thieves. If you have any thoughts on this matter please communicate with us.

EDITORIAL - GENERAL

Because not everyone is an SIA member, a lot of people do not know what is happening with respect to the ongoing South African National Railway and Steam Museum (SANRASM) saga. For those who have recently joined SIA or who have not read the previous two newsletters here is a short summary of the current position.

1) SIA attempted to enter into a dialogue to assist SANRASM back in November 2008 but all correspondence was ignored and requests for meetings were also declined.

2) More recently we decided to raise our profile, site inspections were carried out, and it was obvious that a catastrophe was already unfolding. At that point we managed to secure two meetings with the supremo of SANRASM Lawrence Posniak. SANRASM as it turns out is in effect a secret society with secret membership lists, and no published details of who the donors were for the locomotives on site etc. In 4-hours of meetings with Mr. Posniak little was revealed and little progress was made. Extensive assistance and back-up was offered to turn the situation around but these offers were not formally accepted.

Fortunately, at one of the two meetings, Mike Dyke, another SANRASM Main Board member, was in attendance.

In the absence of Mr. Mike Gammie, the Chairman of SANRASM (the most secret of all the people in the secret society), we decided to talk to Mike Dyke. Mike is a professional man and we found him to be not only open to a dialogue but pragmatic in his response. Mike took the responsibility of issuing the instruction to clear the Chamdor site before the scrap thieves removed every single item themselves. One should remember that millions of Rands worth of valuable brass etc. had already been stolen from the Chamdor site and therefore by the time we arrived on the scene most of the value had been extracted and what was left couldn't be towed or even lifted out by crane.

Had SANRASM acted more quickly the locos would have been saved and a gift of many millions of Rands to scrap thieves would have been avoided.

3) Upon Mike Dyke's authorisation Reclam, an organisation which has often alerted SIA about railway items before cutting, started work. A few valuable components and a boiler were saved. This was for a Class 14 and we will include a special article by Allen Jorgensen in the next edition as to why extraordinary lengths were gone to, to try and save what was left of this locomotive. It is nice to know that something was saved from the Chamdor mess.

4) SIA then carried out an in-depth survey of the main Randfontein SANRASM sites. The situation was little better than Chamdor because axle box cutting had already started and many of the assets including some very valuable locomotives had been abandoned in the Blue Gum plantations surrounding this particular location. With the help of well informed ex SANRASM members we published a list last month in Edition 33 of the SIA newsletter recommending which items should be saved from the site. A proposal was put to SANRASM, a copy of which is attached in this edition for convenience. We are pleased to advise that as a result of an emergency meeting convened by Mike Dyke this proposal has now been accepted.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/sanrasm_proposal_randfontein.pdf

The unintended consequences. Inevitably the media discovered what was happening. Firstly, the Krugersdorp News published an article http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/chamdor_sanrasm.pdf, and this was followed up by The Sunday Times http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/sunday_times.pdf, and thirdly Jenny Crwys-Williams of Radio 702 showed active interest in the whole Chamdor scenario and interviewed Chris Janisch, the Chairman of the Heritage Rail Association of South Africa. She also took calls from a number of people. The podcast on this fairly extensive radio coverage is available at:

<http://www.monitoringsa.com/MSAWebsites/Audio%20Files/>

The UK magazine Steam Railway also included a full page report by Howard Johnston.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/scrap_engines.pdf.

An article appeared on the Trains Magazine web site as well. See: <http://trn.trains.com/en/Railroad>

With the media in full cry it was inevitable that all sorts of people started to sit up and take notice. SIA membership surged due to the number of people showing an interest in what we were trying to do.

Railway Preservation organisations who were previously reticent about talking to us suddenly opened the lines of communication.

The unintended consequences we are talking about include a genuine interest by the media in the prospects for Rail Tourism in South Africa, and improved unity between different preservation fiefdoms who have up to now fought vigorously to maintain their independence.

Finally, slowly but surely, the make up of what has been the SANRASM organisation in the past started to come into focus as ever more people notified us of their existence.

The media noted that there was passion, broad interest and real enthusiasm amongst all racial groups and all age groups for Steam Preservation and Railway Tourism. This is good news but we must build on it.



NGG11, No. 55, at the end of her restoration at Bloemfontein Works 2004. Now at Ixopo.

Geoff Pethick has produced this special report on his visit to the SANRASM site within the week.

First stop was actually Florida Junction shopping centre to measure the North British tank plinthed there. Proved a bit difficult because of the fence, but was a backstop in case I couldn't get into SANRASM.

Next stop Randfontein Estates loco shed. Met Koos Botes, who goes back to the days of steam. He confirmed there is a SANRASM loco at the end of the nearby headshunt, the rail is currently disconnected at one end.

It's been Chamdored and all axle boxes have been cut from the frame, the bogie is missing and some of the driving axles have been cut through, so absolutely no chance of moving it. I can't identify it as it has no boiler plate or anything else identifiable. Didn't actually go into the cab as there is a bees nest in the firebox, shades of Chamdor.

Next stop the old sites. Had a good look around, all very quiet and much the same as before. Measured up the North British tank there, 11.5 metres approx and looked at the fences, all OK.



Met the day security guard and gave a lift to a security guard back to Kagiso, who will be on night duty tonight. Last week he was on duty at the REGM loading point near the SANRASM sites. He was off Monday and Tuesday and returned on Wednesday to say the security firm had 'been chased away' from REGM and another company had taken their place. Not exactly a recommendation as it's the same lot that guard SANRASM.

I'm busy putting together all the weights and dimensions for the locos possibly coming out by road. SAR diagram book is useful for that although tender types are a bit problematical and I'm waiting for info on the Eskom locos from Hennie Heymans who will send them this afternoon.

I would recommend moving the NGG 11 ASAP, I think it's led a charmed life where it is.

Geoff Pethick

The response from our members worldwide has been truly astonishing. We have received hundreds of e-mails regarding Chamdor. Nothing will be achieved by carrying on about what happened. Derek Walker's e-mail is interesting because he attempted to assist as a volunteer and we publish his e-mail with photograph below:

From: DRW [mailto:oldsqueaky@gmail.com]
Sent: 27 September 2010 01:06 PM
To: Mike Dyke; Colin Harris; Mike Gammie; Joe Lekalakala; Lawrence Posniak; Steve Gipson; Tony Attwell; joannewest@btinternet.com
Subject: Disgraceful

Gentlemen,

I don't have words to say about what I have seen at Chamdor this past month. Suffice to say it is a disgrace. You have the temerity to call yourself a museum?

It's about time you all resigned and let people who are interested in preserving our rail heritage look after it. Ironically I visited Chamdor on Heritage Day, wow, there was our heritage, being cut up because of a serious lack of foresight.

I attended the 150th Anniversary of Steam Railways in South Africa trip to Cullinan, on a real working steam powered train. You have the same resources, yet cannot muster a single working anything.

Don't use the "no volunteers" excuse either. I wanted to be a volunteer, I turned up at Randfontein in 2009 and there was nobody there, the place was a shambles, the grass was so high that you could hardly see the locomotives.

It was closed because the grass hadn't been cut, or the cable was stolen...

I phoned your office, nobody was interested. I went to Reefsteamers instead, you don't have volunteers because you chase them away by being obstructionist and having a head in the sand attitude. I have spoken to so many ex SANRASM members that it's about time an ex SANRASM member society was started.

Everybody tells the same story about why they left.

Let me ask one simple question: When last did any of you actually do anything on any of the vehicles at Randfontein? The attached pic says it all. On the back of that set of cylinders was a working machine. She was brought here,

she stopped and never moved again.

She was doomed from the minute you sent her there. That's all that's left and soon even that will be gone. I know there were grand plans behind Chamdor, but they were also impractical plans, a dream that would and could not work.

If this is your vision of how a museum is run I strongly suggest you go visit the Museum of Military History in Saxonwold, and the James Hall Transport Museum in Rosettenville. Or maybe they are wrong or you are right?

Hang your heads in shame.

DR Walker.

<http://www.allatsea.co.za/trains/chamdor.htm>

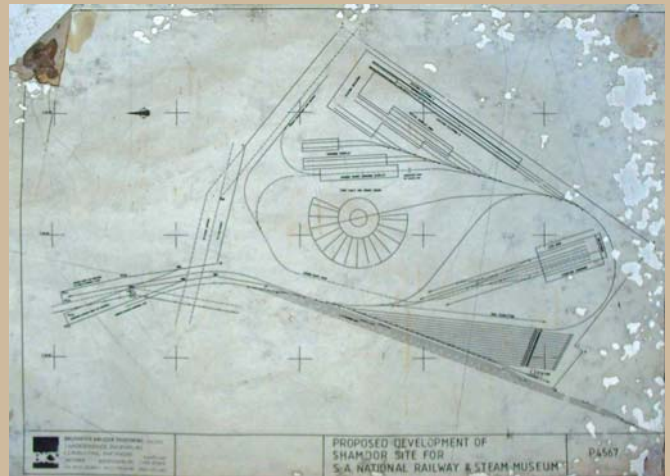




SIA Comment: *This type of e-mail raises many questions. Most Preservation organisations, including SANRASM, continuously complain about lack of volunteers. However, here is a good example of someone who wasn't given the time of day. In fact, Lawrence Posniak complained ad nauseum about lack of volunteers during his two long meetings with SIA.*

A copy of the original grand plan for what SANRASM had hoped to do at Chamdor is featured along side.

The futility of this plan was self-evident almost from the beginning but locos continued to be delivered there.



REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE - SANRASM RANDFONTEIN SITE

We have already circulated two documents:

- A) A complete list at the SANRASM Randfontein site.
- B) A recommended list of items that must be saved.

These two lists are attached.

During the scrapping process at Chamdor, which had to take place urgently due to the fact that the site had been taken over by an organised gang of armed scrap thieves, we received a number of belated requests to save certain components and in fact complete locomotives although the axle boxes had been cut out. We achieved some partial success in this regard, details of which will follow.

Due to the shambolic, dangerous, and unacceptable state of affairs at the Randfontein site there is no doubt that once the valuable items and the items that are sufficiently intact to be saved have been secured or removed then the balance will have to be placed under review. We are currently holding businesslike discussions with Mike Dyke regarding the above.

If you are a restorer, collector, locomotive owner, or prospective owner please scrutinize the attached list with great care. Now is the time to advise Steam in Action exactly what complete locomotives or components you might require. There will never be a single home for all these items but there are solid organisations out there like the Chamber of Mines who need what SANRASM has already abandoned. It is inevitable that as soon as the security is removed the scrap thieves will move back in. It is the intention of SIA to prevent that happening and to rescue as much of the material as possible.

In the case of Chamdor we had a number of people who contacted us asking us to stop the cutting of a locomotive, to extract components, and to make these components available to them. In most cases little consideration was given to the cost of removing the components, the fact that heavy cranes were needed to offload and load items such as boilers, and heavy trucks were also required. SIA does not offer a free service in this regard.

We will deal with requests on a first come first serve basis. However, please remember that once site clearance begins it becomes next to impossible to interfere with the process.

INVENTORY AT SANRASM RANDFONTEIN

Lee Gates of Reefsteamers has produced an outstanding CD covering the complete inventory at SANRASM Randfontein. If anyone is interested in this CD we would be happy to post them a copy. Due to increasing overheads at Steam in Action based on the work we are currently doing we will ask members to make a contribution should they require us to perform any particular service or function on their behalf. Steam in Action's account details are as follows:

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

If you would like the CD please send an e-mail to Joanne West (joannewest@btinternet.com) clearly stating your postal address.

This CD will become a valuable reference item for people wishing to clarify exactly what is at SANRASM. In fact, we would ask those SIA members with good archives to possibly go through the list and to forward us any photographs they have of SANRASM locos, either when they were working or when they first arrived at SANRASM.



19D 2770 Somewhere on the Barkley East line 1974

SPECIAL REPORT ON VOORBAAI

The following list of what is at Voorbaai was supplied by SIA member, Fraser Howell.

NB: All locos coal fired except where noted.

RC denotes assumed in running condition.

Locos not seen on this visit but seen on my last visit in Feb 2009
- 3617 CI 24, 3675 CI 24, 2640 CI 19D, Diesel 32-042.

4122 GMAM RC

4128 GMAM

2698 19D RC

3324 19D RC

2749 19D RC

3321 19D RC

number suspect as 2 engines have the same number (cabside plates / bufferbeam plate)

3322 19D oil fired

3321 19D oil fired

number suspect as 2 engines have the same number (cabside plates / bufferbeam plate)

2683 19D oil fired

3334 19D

3632 24

3692 24

3606 24

3635 24

36?? 24 number unknown

1412 19B

508 14A Zim Railways

615 16A Zim Railways

Diesel 32-047

Steam locos other than those noted RC appear largely complete but in poor external condition eg the Zim locos still have turrets and safety valves.

2 No tenders

2 No water tanks

1 No generator van

3 No coal loaders mounted on DZ wagons.

Various coaches which previously made up the Union LTD trainset.

External condition too bad but some of the timber coaches are deteriorating.

1 No balcony coach.

1 No dining car ex Selati

Several living vans.

Several suburban slam door coaches in generally poor condition.

A report on the Voorbaai situation by Geoff Pethick follows below.

SIA members will be aware that several years ago Transnet Foundation stopped running The Union Limited, their heritage train, which covered not only South Africa but neighbouring countries as well. The serviceable stock was stored at Voorbaai and, following the demise of the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe last month, all that stock has joined it as well.

Storage in the open in coastal areas is not a good idea and the effects of the salt air and baking sun has had an effect on everything.

You can see from the accompanying photographs (*right*) that corrosion is showing through on some coaches and on others the Malthoid roof covering is splitting and letting in water. It's only a short slippery slope until damage is done to the interior which is expensive to rectify. In some instances windows are not closed, allowing dust and dirt to enter more easily.

There are quite a number of complete locos at Voorbaai, however they will also suffer from storage in these conditions. It's important to cover chimneys to stop water ingress into the blast pipe and cylinder area. Coal needs to be removed from the tenders as this quickly rots the steel. All ash needs to be cleaned out to prevent more corrosion and a thick layer of grease on motion and fittings helps preserve them and deters theft.





This diesel would benefit from having its inspection doors closed and electrical items protected, also the exhaust and roof openings covered.

If the heritage train is to run again in the Mossel Bay, George, Knysna area, it will be done using the stock at Voorbaai. If it deteriorates or is vandalised or chopped like other locos, any hopes of running the train will disappear forever. Hopefully this will not happen and Transnet Foundation needs to make sure it doesn't.



TRANSNET

SIA members will be aware that we have been in discussion with Transnet for sometime now regarding the future of their assets.

In the July 2010 newsletter we advised that the Heritage committee of Transnet has decided to dispose off all Heritage locomotives in South Africa which will be offered for sale in a sensible manner with clear distinctions being made between historically significant locomotives and locomotives that are redundant. This is a once off opportunity for people who support Railway Preservation, who would like to own railway locomotives and who would like to make a contribution to solidifying South Africa's Rail Preservation for them to actually step forward and become directly involved.

SIA has long maintained that while we receive lots of words and wise counsel there is not much action behind these words because people are perhaps frustrated as to how they can contribute. Whether you are resident in South Africa or live somewhere else in the world there is no reason why you cannot have equity in a locomotive. This will be a genuine sale to the private sector by the government and SIA will

provide guidance as to how these locomotives can be moved, stored, and finally restored either cosmetically or to full operating condition. All the resources exist in South Africa but they need to be carefully coordinated.

The starting point for this whole exercise is for us to start to understand who would like to acquire a locomotive. We might well be able to put groups of people together so they have a part in a steam locomotive.

Should you be interested I would be most grateful if you could communicate with us. Please note that this is an advance notification of a policy that we believe will be adopted. Transnet has advised us that an official press release will be coming out in due course and it is for that reason that we are writing to you personally rather than making any particularly formal rigid announcements.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/sia_meets_transnet.pdf



A tranquil scene on the now largely defunct South African Narrow Gauge network. Photograph credit: Gary Barnes.

TRANSNET CONTINUES TO SCRAP RAILWAY ROLLING STOCK INDISCRIMINATELY

Another Internet auction opened and closed in short order during the month. See link:

<http://www.go-dove.com/event-14829/Transnet-Freight-Rail-Sale-17/lot-11/309-728-kgs-Coaches-and-cabooses-%2838%29>

We were alerted by a number of members to the fact that there were four coaches of great historical interest. As a result of intervention by SIA we have been assured by the Purchasing Department at Transnet that they will not be scrapped. However, what is to be done with them?

14006 was removed from safe storage in Bloemfontein and sent to PE with other Museum stock. Fortunately it wasn't transferred to Lootsberg Pass with about ten others, which were later scrapped.

GREEN LIGHT FOR PRIVATE RAILWAYS ON BRANCH LINES

The following article appeared in the Sunday Times on 26th September 2010

Green light for private railways on branch lines But some stretches require costly repairs, writes Lucky Biyase

Sep 26, 2010 12:00 AM | By Lucky Biyase

Private companies keen to operate the 7278km of branch lines that Transnet Rail Freight (TRF) has made available to the private sector have until tomorrow to register expressions of interest.

Those who are interested might require deep pockets as 3350km of the lines on offer are in poor condition because of years of neglect, vandalism and theft.

The branch lines on offer represent about 35% of TFR's 20953km rail route network across the country.

According to TFR, with each concession agreement the parastatal will retain ownership of the branch line assets and grant to the concessionaire a long-term right of use.

Each concessionaire will have to make the necessary capital investments, maintain the assets to agreed standards throughout the concession period, and operate railway services.

The railway service may be freight transportation or passenger transportation, or a combination of the two, the company said.

Jannie de Villiers, executive director of the National Chamber of Milling, who took the parliamentary portfolio committee on agriculture, forestry and fisheries on a whirlwind tour of the branch lines during public hearings on the state of the sector last week, said some lines can be salvaged and even run profitably.

However, de Villiers said it does not make sense for TFR itself to invest in many of the branch lines. Therefore, he did not believe it would make sense for the private sector to do so either.

Ben Lombard, managing director of the North West-based grain company MGK, which buys grain from farmers and sells it to millers, said buying branch lines will be expensive.

"We are fortunate because our silos are situated in a place where Transnet's infrastructure is still fully operational," he said.

Lombard, whose company funds farmers' crop planting through a facility that comes from the Land Bank, said agricultural companies could help fund the branch lines.

"But, to be honest with you, I don't think it is an option for any agri-company to consider investing in these lines because the road transport system is so efficient and is far more competitive in terms of costs," he said.

Roger Godsmark, chairman of the Pietermaritzburg-based Timber Industry Transport Committee, said his industry is looking at the possibility of running a 770km cluster of branch lines in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands region, but wants discussions with Transnet to try to find a win-win situation. The lines run from Pietermaritzburg to Greytown, Ixopo and Dalton.

"Most of the lines that we are interested in are operational. But we are aware that people have been stealing some of the lines. These lines were built with taxpayers' money and to expect the industry to pay the full amount to rehabilitate them will simply be not on," Godsmark said.

Chris Wells, acting chief executive of Transnet, said the parastatal understood that the private sector might have different approaches to line operation.

"Through this process we aim to share ideas on what it might take to make these lines viable for private operators," he said.

During a test exercise at the end of June, Transnet received about 115 registrations of interest, which included respondents from several international operators, JSE-listed logistics and transport companies and other local companies.

Lindie Stroebe, manager of economic intelligence and finance at Agribusiness Chamber, said Transnet has tended to focus on transporting mining output because this is a continuous activity - unlike agriculture, which is seasonal and difficult to plan for.

Both Stroebe and De Villiers warned that if a drought hits SA in the near future the railway system will be unable to move the country's imports because of logistics problems.



ON TRACK: The dilapidated station building in Steynsburg, a town in the rural Eastern Cape that might once again see trains calling to collect farm produce Picture: COIS MARAIS



THE COAL STAGE SURVIVES AT WITBANK

Ian Pretorius has sent us the following:

There is a very nice coal stage at Witbank, it is still in fair condition and not too large to move. It is of the conveyor belt type. And would be a great asset to a private steam operator.

Efforts should be made to preserve this coal stage. It is not controlled by Transnet foundation and could slip by the radar and be scrapped by Transnet Freight Rail.

SIA comment: *SIA member Hannes Paling is engaging with the officials on the ground. We agree with Ian and will do everything we can to save this item.*



ALWYN VINTCENT TUG UPDATE

Time is passing fast in connection with the Steam Tug Alwyn Vintcent. Far too fast, in fact.

The only way the vessel may be moved from the harbour is by road, and no movements like this are allowed during the Holiday Season of December and January. Permits need to be applied for, from the Road Authorities, Traffic Police and from Eskom and Telkom who might have to raise wires or take them down. These applications take several weeks.

Most of the members of the Villiersdorp Tractor & Engine Club are fruit farmers who are totally committed to their Harvests from January to May. Time is running out for the vessel tied up where she is; the Owners of the V&A Waterfront need the space to build quays for pleasure vessels, the owners of which will pay heavily for mooring.

The stumbling block at the moment is that the vessel still belongs to an Australian called Gordon Bashford, who paid R2 000 for it and we're trying to contact him. He is apparently infirm at the moment. SIA sent him a letter in this last week, which was replied to by his father, Peter Bashford, who says he is his only representative. SIA has sent the attached e-mail, by way of a reply which we hope will produce a satisfactory result.

We are planning to use SIA representatives to make personal contact.

Andy Selfe

Sent: 13 October 2010 11:26

To: Peter Bashford

Subject: For the kind attention of Gordon Bashford

Importance: High

Dear Mr. Bashford,

I represent Steam in Action, a substantial Rail lobby group with international membership of over 1,000 steam enthusiasts.

We have received a number of reports regarding the fact that you have some influence on the future of the steam tug Alwyn Vintcent, which is in Cape Town. A preservation group, many of whom were SIA members, have come up with a viable plan to relocate the tug to a safe area not too far from Cape Town and to restore it at least as a static item in the short-term. Longer term plans would be to bring it back to steam.

I am a little disturbed by the reports I have had regarding your activities with a number of similar vehicles in different countries and jurisdictions. I would urge you to donate this particular tug to the preservation group. You can use Steam in Action as an organisation to act on both parties behalf. We are credible with strong legal, fiscal, and governance credentials.

I suggest that this happens sooner than later because of the possibility of a severe deterioration in relationships between preservationists in South Africa and Australia. It is obvious that you acquired the tug with its preservation in mind but through understandably difficult logistical considerations this was never allowed to happen. This means the tug is now seriously prejudiced by the possibility of vandalism, scrap, theft etc. In short, the matter is urgent. I would be most grateful if you could respond to our e-mail so that we can deal with the matter. Should you require banking, legal, or governmental letters of endorsement regarding our activities we would be happy to supply them.

Steam in Action



The attached photo shows the remains of the Lincoln Castle at Grimsby. Unsuccessful efforts were made to save her. Do we want the same to happen to Alwyn Vintcent?

Sent in by Bernard Dodd from Cleethorpes, who had this to say:

The last throes of the Lincoln Castle, her engines were ripped out as bits of scrap. A couple of low tides and it will be the end.

<http://paddlesteamers.awardspace.com/>

CLUB AND OPERATOR NEWS

Umgeni Steam Railway, Natal

Both Grant Fryer and Aidan McCarthy have sent us good photographs of the successful celebrations in Natal for the 150 year celebration train.

Thought I would forward some pictures of our USR 150 celebration train. Grant Fryer



Here are a few pictures from the Umgeni Steam Railway 150 year anniversary train to the point in Durban docks. Another good example of cooperation between SIA clubs as Shaun Ackerman assisted Umgeni as driver for the train. Aidan McCarthy



Photograph top left: Front (L-R): Shaun Ackerman; Roy Raats; Ryan Fincham; Grant Fryer; Lauren Edgar. Centre: Clem Robins; Harold Smit; Graham Gillett; Greg Hart; Rob Macgregor; Andy Anderson. Back: Simon Anderson; Ronald Collyer.

Sandstone Heritage Trust, Eastern Free State



"New loco shed nearly complete. Length 150m."

Gert Jubileus' weekly report provides a good summary of the work that has been carried out. Please note that the massive 150-metre x 30-metre locomotive storage facility previously based in Ficksburg has been moved to an ultra secure environment on the farm. This shed will accommodate 70 Narrow Gauge items or a lesser number of Cape Gauge items as required.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/eastern_free_state_trains.pdf

Sole surviving 16 CR resides at Sandstone. Gert Jubileus has published an interesting story as to how this came about.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/st_helena_days_2.pdf

Friends of the Rail, Pretoria



Friends of the Rail's Class 19D 2650 accelerates to cut the '150 Years of Railways' ribbon at Cullinan, 26 September 2010. Photo: J Batwell

To view the Friends of the Rail October '10 newsletter click here: http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/fotr_newsletter_oct_2010.pdf

Reefsteamers, Germiston

Reefsteamers has been through great financial difficulty. Recent financial rationalization and high-level EXCO changes have re-enabled operation according to sound business principles. Reefsteamers has successfully established a consistent positive cash flow and is steadily paying off the creditors. Transnet have been very fair in drafting a payback plan... for which we are very grateful.

We are still entering our peak time of the year, with several trains already fully booked and we hope to capitalize on the surge in revenue. We also have the mandate to provide a steam train for 2011's Rotary Great Train Race and are working on getting permissions to run. We are also looking at improving and offering the badly underutilized Manager's Coach No.42 as a self-contained corporate business coach for our runs. The coming Cherry Festival Train is expected to make a slight profit. (It normally runs at a loss.)

We have been granted permission to start our trains from Platform 14 at Johannesburg Station – an extension of our hard-won smokeless run-through privilege. This is a more central location and the car park much more secure than that at Maraisburg. And we don't have to pay for the security!

We will no longer be stopping at Magaliesburg station, due to their consistent failure to upgrade or service the shabby picnic grounds. We will still use the Magaliesburg Hotel stop, (and possibly the hotel's own picnic grounds) as well as running further down the line to Swallows Inn. There are still investigations concerning running trains via Springs to Heidelberg, but the outlying track facilities preclude efficient operation.

On the traction front, we have four locomotives running, Class 12AR No.1535, Class 25NC No.3472, Class 15F No.3046 and GMAM No.4079. Both the Class 12AR and then the 15F suffered valve spool failure requiring rebuilds. The 15F suffered a failure due to the debut-run failure of the RHS combination lever and the valves traveled too far forward and hit the cylinder head. Both have been repaired – the 15F receiving a complete new valve rod in the process. The 12AR is reported to be even more powerful than she was and remains our prime day trip locomotive. She is currently having the dynamo replaced with a spare unit due to failing bearings.

Sandstone Heritage Trust's iconic green GMAM Garratt is complete and is planned to run on the 6th November – with Wilfred and Lyndie Mole on board, the first time they will have personally seen their own locomotive steaming along for Reefsteamers. Incidentally, the coal will be sponsored for that run as well.

David Shepherd's Class 15F No.3052 'Avril' was offered to Friends of the Rail (FoTR) on loan as assistance while they are entering silly-season with only one operating engine. But Rovos Rail declined permission to store the locomotive in their secure compound on FoTR's behalf. However, the 15F's re-tubing is still under way with 52 tubes to be replaced and these are going to be sponsored. In the meanwhile, the valve gear is to be totally re-bushed using Vesconite bearings, as per Reefsteamers' standards. The formalization of the locomotive naming rights program is still under way.

Reefsteamers is preparing for their role in the relocation of SANRASM assets. We are going to be extending our electrified perimeter fence and restoring four partially-lifted sidings. The security has already been upgraded and future security will be a combination of permanent armed guard as well as a sophisticated electronic surveillance system. While it is impractical to make a large railway facility 100% theft proof, we concur with Steam in Action that it is more cost effective to secure a single centralized facility rather than many scattered small facilities. We have no particular intent to use any of SANRASM's equipment, but will instead stabilize and store it safely with the most critical or weather-sensitive items going under cover.

We wish to thank Steam in Action for their continued support and guidance in challenging times.

Lee Gates



Reefsteamers: Not ready for the sunset clause just yet. Class 12AR No. 1535 'Susan' cools her (w)heels for 20 minutes before running out to fetch our coaches on the last leg of their return journey from Rotary's Great Train Race 2010. (Witbank.)

Country Music on a Steam Train

Usually unnoticed, our marketing team works hard, often handling queries and bookings from 8am until past 11pm. Fortunately, the RESULTS are noticeable as Reefsteamers trains are well patronized. Adding a draw card, such as a Country and Western theme, makes the marketing job easier; especially as country music and steam trains seem to go so well together. On 4th September, Reefsteamers ran a Country Music special with Katryn, JJ and Matt Hurter on board and their music rivalled that of the Class 12AR locomotive which pulled the train. They were singing casually in the lounge car on the way but pulled out the stops at the Magaliesburg Station Picnic grounds.

Incidentally, we had Geoff Cooke and a small party of his on board as well. (They behaved themselves.) The event was slightly marred by the lack of servicing at the destination as well as a mid-day power failure – but the 'yeehaw' over-rode the 'blues' and we carried on strummin' through to departure time. The event was a success and it is planned to make this a yearly event to both establish a tradition and to maximize revenue on a limited choice of destinations.

Click here to download a Reefsteamers Photo-Essay in Adobe PDF Format:

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/country_music.pdf

The Apple Express

Here is an article which appeared in The Herald newspaper recently:

Fears growing for future of Apple Express 2010/09/27

Shaanaaz de Jager WEEKEND POST REPORTER

CONCERNED rail enthusiasts say the running of Nelson Mandela Bay's famous Apple Express steam train may be derailed by Transnet, which has called for expressions of interest for certain branch lines.

Nerina Skuy, of the Heritage Railway Association of SA, told Weekend Post that this was particularly concerning since the country was commemorating 150 years of rail this year.

Mboniso Sigonyela, spokesman for Transnet, said the parastatal had issued a call for expressions of interest as an opportunity for private parties to operate and maintain branch lines.

"This is a market-testing exercise and does not bind any party to a particular decision," Sigonyela said.

He said the 282km Port Elizabeth narrow gauge line used by the Apple Express was one of the branch lines that could be concessioned to a private party.

"Once Transnet has received feedback from interested parties through the expression of interest, Transnet will be in a position to decide on the appropriate way forward, and will consult with affected parties as necessary." Skuy said the effect of Transnet's concessioning on the Apple Express remained "uncertain".

"The success depends entirely on Transnet, which must be inclusive in the concessioning process," she said.

Skuy said the line had the potential to run 20 trains a day but "there is not a political will to run trains".

"The operation over the last three years slowed down because Transnet did not deliver.

"I have to work out a tourism plan in advance and sit with the January 2012 route plan. If freight rail comes down on the line our tourism plans are cancelled for that time.

"Everything is so uncertain. It lies in Transnet's hands," said Skuy.

Her concern was that although "concessioning" was not new to Africa, the fall-out from failed attempts was highly evident on the continent.

However, the running of the Sisonke Stimela steam tourist train service in KwaZulu-Natal proved that it is possible for rail and heritage rail tourism to be embraced through a "government-driven, private sector-funded and community-based" approach. In turn this established that the holistic approach was more conducive to adding value and benefit to all stakeholders. "It seems, however, that the powers that be in rail are not considering participating in any partnerships in working towards a solution and the coffers of municipalities and provincial government have been stripped to the proverbial bone to deliver the soccer World Cup," Skuy said.

As a result of the focus by Transnet on freight as its core business, and no back-up plan for heritage rail tourism, this sector had suffered drastically.

"There are no instant solutions, no quick fixes and no solution that is not going to cost money, time, effort, skills, commitment and resources.

"The burning question is who is going to pay? Right now, it seems that the minnows in the industry – steam clubs, operators and caretakers of heritage rolling stock – are carrying the burden and the cost."

Sigonyela said the Apple Express had an agreement with Transnet Freight Rail (TRF) in terms of which TFR provided access to the line and haulage services.

"There is nothing to stop Apple Express collaborating with an entrepreneurial investor who is willing and able to take over the maintenance and operation of the PE narrow gauge line and develop the associated properties," said Sigonyela.

For the moment though, heritage rail operators are putting aside these challenges in order to commemorate 150 years of rail in the country.

The Apple Express, Umgeni Steam Rail in KwaZulu-Natal and Friends of the Rail in Gauteng will be running special trains this weekend to mark the occasion. The Bay's grand old lady will be taking visitors along its usual route, but opting for Witteklip as its destination tomorrow.

<http://www.theherald.co.za/article.aspx?id=609341>

Steve Langley

E-mail : Steve.langley@gmail.com





Top: Another photo of a SAR traction engine with an abnormal load at Kazerne in Johannesburg.

The other two photographs show how the SAR experimented way back in 1926 with double-deck motor car wagons!

The modern car-carrier trains introduced on the SAR in 1972 were not the first double-deck car-carriers on our railways!

These photos were all published in my SAR & H Photo Journal in the 1990s.

Courtesy of Les Pivnic

RAILWAY HISTORY GROUP

We have scanned a copy of the special edition of their publication celebrating 150 years of Railways in South Africa.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/railway_history_group.pdf

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION - TRAMS

From: Dylan Knott
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2010 10:27 AM
Subject: SIA item - Trams

Can anyone please inform SIA of how many old trams or trolley busses still exist in South Africa in any form? These can range from preserved trams to derelict hulks. The intention is to identify which ones can still be saved for preservation.

A well known example was preserved at Walkerville, Gauteng for many years. #149 was plinthed in the veld in 1961 by a former tram driver. It was painted in red and white livery. Later on it was painted green. It is rumoured to have gone to a resort called Kiepersol or may still be in Walkerville. If anyone knows more about this tram please let us know.

Another double-decker tram is situated in Danville, Pretoria.

Cheers,
Dylan

SEMINAR ON MUSEUM MATTERS

The University of the Western Cape have tasked themselves with a project to investigate the possibilities of establishing a Transport Museum in Cape Town.

In the last few days they held a symposium at the University which SIA member, Ian Pretorius, was invited to attend. Reading through the papers, two of which are attached, helps us to understand why we have such a problem attempting to communicate with Transnet on Rail Heritage matters.

There is a huge difference in mindset between traditional and internationally accepted Railway Heritage views and those being discussed here. As Ian said "Is it a bridge too far?"

We would very much like our SIA members to read these papers and to comment. It is not an easy task.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/anis_daraghma_paper3.pdf
http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/jade_gibson_paper4.pdf
http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/transport_colloquium_programme1.pdf

MEMBERS' FEEDBACK - SANRASM

From: James E van den Heever [mailto:evdheever@busassess.co.za]

Sent: 22 September 2010 07:19
Subject: HERITAGE DAY 2010
To One and ALL,

Notwithstanding all the challenges, I am proud to be part of the HERITAGE movement.

Recently I found much inspiration in the manner in which Wilfred Mole and Mike Meyers unselfishly handled the SANRASM saga. The success of their contribution has made HERITAGE DAY 2010 a special occasion. THANK YOU!

To the team of supporters who ALSO contributed to the SANRASM resolution – THANK YOU!

May the above animated slide presentation give you joy!

HAVE A BLESSED HERITAGE DAY

ED van den Heever

From: Ralph Montagu [mailto:Ralph.Montagu@beaulieu.co.uk]
Sent: 28 September 2010 22:39
Subject: RE: SURVIVING LOCOS IN SOUTH AFRICA

I write to you whilst listening to the recording of the radio phone-in about SANRASM. It really brings home the horror of what is happening. I know this is a very traumatic time for all those involved with steam preservation in SA, especially those of you who seek to take action if only you could overcome the obstacles

Best wishes,
Ralph Montagu
Beaulieu, UK

From: lefteris.hadjizacharias@cyta.com.cy
To: mike.gammie@btinternet.com ; lawrence.posniak@eskom.co.za ; colin@corpnetdesign.co.za ; pm4@newnorthwest.co.za ; mikedye@iafrica.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2010 9:21 AM

Dear Sirs,

It is really shocking to go through the SIA's Newsletter Editions 32 and 33, which describe the catastrophe that has taken place at the two sites of SANRASM.

Preserving a country's heritage, industrial or other, is of invaluable importance and it is really a pity (and shame) that the SANRASM have failed to live up to its commitments. I strongly believe that SIA's actions regarding the preservation of the locomotives and wagons that have survived the long period of attrition, deserve all the support they can receive. Such priceless collection of irreplaceable items cannot be left to erode anymore, nor to be recycled in the steel industry.

I only can say: "Please go along with the suggestions of the SIA team!!!"

Lefteris Hadjizacharias

From: Jens Uwe [mailto:flosse_z@yahoo.com]
Sent: 28 September 2010 11:07
Subject: Henschel at Sanrasm

Dear SIA

Thank you for all the good work you've done so far and I was wondering if this e-mail could be passed on to the persons visiting SANRASM.

I would like to know if the little Henschel shunter (build 1950) referred to on the SANRAM list is the same as pictured in L. Pivnic photo journal vol1 nr4 on page 8.

If yes, what condition is the engine in?

Thank you.
Jens

Geoff Pethick replied on SIA's behalf as follows:

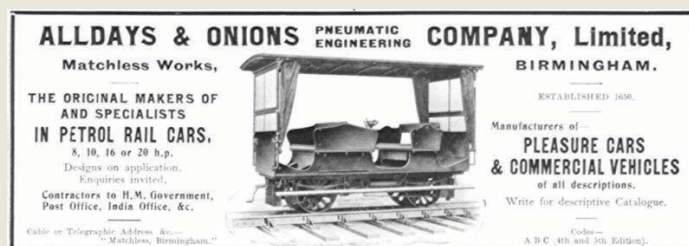
From: Geoff Pethick [mailto:geoffp@netactive.co.za]
Sent: 28 September 2010 15:35
To: Jens Uwe
Subject: Re: Henschel at SANRASM

Hi Jens

The Henschel you are referring to is 28392, built 1950, and has been under the 'care' of SANRASM in recent years. I saw this loco a couple of weeks ago, stored in an unlocked shed and looking quite woebegone. It is minus all its non ferrous fittings, it's unclear whether they have been stolen or not, and it looks a far cry from Les Pivnic's photograph.

Steam in Action is currently engaged in rescuing the remaining locos at SANRASM's sites before they follow those at Chamdor. Look at the Steam in Action website for further news of that <http://www.steam-in-action.com/> and add your name to the SIA membership list to stay in touch with further developments.

Regards,
Geoff Pethick



Rail cars are a simple and inexpensive way to utilise sections of our National Railway network, many of which are now fragmented into small pieces as a result of line theft. SIA would like to focus more on rail cars.

They are also relatively simple but fascinating restoration projects. This advertisement for an Alldays & Onions rail car was sent in by Norman Painting. Somewhere under there, there is a petrol engine.



MEMBERS' FEEDBACK - SANRASM



FRIENDS OF THE RAIL

Established 1986

Preserving South African Railway History

PO Box 35965 Menlo Park 0102 South Africa

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E-mail: sales@friendsoftherail.com

Web: <http://www.friendsoftherail.com>

10 September 2010

As members of SIA, FOTR would like to express its full support for the current initiative in dealing with SANRASM. Hard decisions must be taken in the interests of preservation and we are all for this.

We may also be able to offer storage space for a few items at Hermanstad, should this be necessary. Please count on us for assistance if necessary.

Regards

Nathan Berelowitz
Chairman

The Friends of the Rail Association - incorporated under section 21, "not for gain"
Registration No. 95/09790/08

Directors: SG Appleton*, NH Berelowitz (Chairman), LJ Hagen, CE Janisch (Secretary),
JA Koch, SJ Smith, AC Victor, WD Victor, KR Wilson-Smith* (* British)



MEMBERS' FEEDBACK

From: Ajgrushton@aol.com [mailto:Ajgrushton@aol.com]
Sent: 15 October 2010 14:04
To: joannewest@btinternet.com
Subject: STEAM IN SOUTH AFRICA

It was with mounting concern and great sympathy that I saw the sorry tale of lost locomotives gradually unfolding. I read the pieces and concluded that I had no bright, breezy, out of context European ideas for you. Your supporters are evidently sage operators, able to get within the practical achievable and to concentrate limited resources where they matter most. If the other guys in RSA do not listen to you, then a sort of locomotive Darwinism will inevitably apply.

We are in trouble here in UK, as no one has any money - apparently when they did, eighteen months ago, it was someone else's anyway! So the same lessons apply to us! However, anything you need a contribution on, I shall do my best.

I would like to ask a favour, however. I am writing a book on the WHR Renaissance, and it are the descriptions and histories of our acquired NG15 (133,134) and NGG16 (87,109,138,140,143) locomotives. I can get lots of builders details, lots of rescue and restoration information and pictures, but almost nil on what the locos did in service, and where they were and worked. I bet you know someone who has this information. Could you pass on the inquiry to them please?

With kind regards,
Gordon Rushton

From: Peter Micenko [mailto:PMicenko@ARTC.com.au]
Sent: 05 October 2010 01:42
Subject: FW: Rhino Poachers : SA Steam going the same way

Hi SIA members,

The attached photo may seem shocking but this is exactly what is happening to South African steam. A Rhino horn or the non ferrous fittings/axleboxes. They all have the same result.

Death of the individual and ultimate death of the railway tourism industry.

Peter



From: janorrel [mailto:janorrel@mweb.co.za]
Sent: 07 October 2010 20:08
Subject: DURBAN MINIATURE TRAIN

As a point of interest, for memory's sake, this photo.

I distinctly remember this train because as a primary school boy, I could get into the white passenger car at the back. So many enthusiasts would like to know what has happened to this beautiful (large) miniature train. The lay out was right next to the snake park.

Share this with me: A narrow gauge train is a miniature train that has reached puberty.

Regards
Jan Ebersohn





MEMBERS' FEEDBACK



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]27 September 2010

To: SIA
Att: Joanne West

Dear Joanne,

Yes, keep up the good work producing the SIA newsletter- it's much better reading than the ANC Manifesto!

I dearly hope that the Western Cape Minister Alan Winde can do constructive things about the George-Knysna line as promised, I'll probably see him on the 6th of October about other matters but will emphasize the importance of steam generated tourism.

I don't know how you finance the newsletter, I don't think I've ever paid any member ship fees other than a donation years ago.

Let me know if I can help.

Yours Faithfully

HANS HERRMANN



Cape Regional Chamber
(Member)

(AHG) Hans Herrmann (E) Eugene Petzer (CE) Karien Terblanche

Reg. No. 2002/027537/1



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Angola

From: Gavin Hamilton <gavin@hamilton.powernet.co.uk>
 Date: Tue, Oct 12, 2010 at 9:52 AM
 Subject: [Garratt] The axeman visits...
 To: Garratt@yahoogroups.com

The bad news is that scrapmen have started clearing the dump of locomotives at Catete in Angola, there were 4 Krupp Garratts (551 Class) and all the entire BP 501 class there. I've yet to hear exactly what has been cut up but definitely one of the Krupps is gone. This news has been inevitable since the Chinese started rebuilding the CFL. The unusual fact is that we know when this happened whereas the normal result is that everything just vanishes. Where they intend to go next is anyone's guess but the CFB at Huambo (and other sites) must be under threat.

Gavin Hamilton



Above is a picture taken at the Yerevan Railway Museum a few days ago by John Middleton. A Russian E class of about 1930 - the "museum" is the coach - full of interesting old photos - complete with staff of 4.

United Kingdom

Peter Lemmey from the UK has sent us the following:

From: Peter.Lemmey@dh.gsi.gov.uk
 Sent: 22 September 2010 13:55
 Subject: FEDECRAIL UPDATE No 12

This is the latest from David Morgan's FEDECRAIL group of railway preservation people across Europe. Several things in it of interest. I enjoyed the Hungary event last year and the plans for Germany in Spring 2011 may be worth watching.

BTW "Friend" is actually the most junior form of affiliation.

Peter Lemmey

http://www.steam-in-action.com/images/pdf/update_no_12.pdf

Zimbabwe

Les Smith kindly sent us this article which recently appeared in The Chronicle on Wednesday 13th October 2010

NRZ to refurbish seven more steam locomotives

Midlands Correspondent

Steam locomotives have proved very popular with tourists and this has prompted the National Railways of Zimbabwe to refurbish seven additional locomotives to bring the fleet of steam locomotives to 10, the parastatal's public relations manager, Mr Fanuel Masikati, said yesterday.

In an interview, Mr Masikati said the locomotives were being used for rail leisure safari, targeting mainly tourists.

Mr Masikati said the recent steam locomotive trial run from Bulawayo to Victoria Falls proved very popular with tourists.

"Our target was to have 200 passengers for the maiden trip from Bulawayo to Victoria Falls but we ended up with more than 300 as the trip was over subscribed. In response, we decided to refurbish additional locomotives to meet demand," he said.

Mr Masikati said the rail leisure steam safari trains will be running on the Bulawayo-Victoria Falls, Bulawayo-Plumtree and Bulawayo-Mbalabala routes.

"These trains will run on special days such as the Mother's, Father's, Valentine's and family fun days," he said.

Mr Masikati said introduction of the rail leisure steam safari trains was expected to generate additional business for the parastatal which in turn was going to increase revenue inflow.

"Tourists and the general members of the public enjoy steam locomotives as evidenced by the overwhelming response we got for the maiden Bulawayo-Victoria Falls trip. We are receiving a lot of inquiries locally and internationally from individuals and families that want to take a ride on the trains.

Mr Masikati said the launch of the facility was yet to be confirmed.

"Right now we are going to exhibit the rail leisure safari train at the Sanganai-Hlanganani travel expo which this year is going to be held in Harare. It is only after this that we will decide on the launch date," he said.