



23rd March to 1st April 2012

Information Bulletin No. 2

1) Rail Site Inspection.

A site inspection was held between members of the Sandstone Heritage Trust staff, Sandstone Estates, and Keith Flint, Managing Director of Flint Construction from Natal recently.

Generally the line was considered to be in good condition but a number of decisions were taken. These included:

- (a) Improving a number of the curves including the tight one at Pandora.
- (b) Replacing a number of sections of line that were worn which were causing slippage.
- (c) Carrying out relatively extensive earthworks on the line to further repair storm damage and improve the drainage in case we had very heavy rainfall between now and the end of March.
- (d) Flint Construction offered to make a specialist supervisor available to carry out an 8-week maintenance programme on the line from January through to March.
- (e) Due to the addition of a number of new storage lines a draftsman would have to redraw the line showing all the current extensions. It is interesting to note that quite a few kilometres of extra line have been added in recent months.
- (f) Pandora section. Resulting from the site inspection referred to above it was decided to reopen the Pandora section. However, we currently lack a set of left hand points and urgent steps have been taken to see if we can secure a set of 2-ft Narrow Gauge points so that the line can be reconnected. It is our desire to take our visitors around the top of the Vailima loop. The passing loop at the top of Vailima has been removed but this should not be an obstacle.

A copy of Keith's report is attached for those who are interested in the technical details of such matters.

2) Is the event on or off?

We have had a number of people e-mail us to ask whether or not we are serious about the event next year. The answer is **yes** regardless of weather etc.

The weather forecast is for very heavy rains in the period January, February, and March 2012 so we all have to take into account that we might have to face those challenges. However, the farm is big enough and the opportunity is great enough and the diversity of machinery extensive enough to allow us to be creative and do different things. I don't believe for a moment that anyone would be bored or be able to turn around and say "Why am I here – there is nothing happening?" We are going to extraordinary lengths this year to bring in extra expertise so that machines and equipment that one would hardly ever see operating will in fact be out there in all its glory. Some of these items are indifferent to the weather so we sincerely believe that when measured against equivalent events in other parts of the world we will be able to give you your money's worth. One should remember that we do this for ourselves as well, i.e. we also like to enjoy the experience. If we have to drive Sherman tanks through the mud or take part in simulated derailments then we look forward to it rather than feel that our event will be compromised.

As always we have no formal programme – we will adjust the programme hour by hour if necessary.

However, that does not mean to say that the long-range planning isn't taking place so that we have as many options as possible lined up to entertain you.

WORK IN PROGRESS



Transporting kikuyu grass from Grootdraai to Pandora for the embankment.



Arriving at Pandora.



The embankment has been widened and strengthened.



Planting the grass... remember to inspect it when you visit.



We are reducing the curves at Pandora and putting in additional drainage.



Wheat and Steam

The railway will be used to assist with the wheat harvest which is just getting underway.





May we take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and we look forward to meeting up with you in the New Year.

“The light in South Africa... replaces architecture.”

By Ibid – Extract from ‘The Travellers Dictionary of Quotation’ by Peter Yapp.

Wilf Mike Joanne Babita Leigh Des Peter Stefan lucas and the whole team