



Friends of the Choo-Tjoe

The Loop

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NEWSLETTER NUMBER 4 – JANUARY 2012

A bit late, but a Happy New Year to you all. Let us hope that 2012 brings us some positive news concerning the reopening of our line.

Those of you who live locally may have seen a report in the Cxpress that “senior Transnet officials “ had approached the Garden Route Cycleway people, along with other interested parties, to discuss the future of the line. We have been invited to this meeting and will report on it's outcome in a future newsflash. One is tempted to say we have heard it all before and this is just another stalling exercise. We will have to wait and see.

Julie Jenkins

Membership

Attached you will find a membership renewal form. At the end of December, membership stood at 139 Full members, 5 Family members and 9 Overseas members. We hope we can continue to grow the membership; the more members we have, the bigger the voice we have. Please help your railway by completing the form and returning it to the address at the top of the page. If any of our mail recipients would like to join, apply to the same address. Payment by bank transfer would be appreciated and details can be found on the bottom of the form.

Colin Jenkins

When last did you visit our website, www.friendsofthechoo-tjoe? have a look. I think it's pretty smart. There is still work in progress on the site such as the picture gallery, but Rome was not built in a day (nor was our Trolley restored). Go to the Sponsors' page under Donations and see who has been supporting our association and endeavours in the background.

Without these organisations and people we would not have been able to achieve what we have to date. When you need help or services that they provide think of them first and support the sponsors who support the Friends of The Choo-Tjoe.

We also have a Facebook page, follow the link on the website or go straight to Facebook, where you can find up to date information in respect of our trolley restoration project.

UPDATE ON TROLLEY PROGRESS

Progress on the trolley has appeared to have slowed somewhat recently but we are finding that putting 'things' together is taking a little more time than taking them apart!

Steady progress is, however, being made by the rebuilding team; the mechanical refurbishment now complete. New foot step brackets and timber steps have been the latest work to be finished.

Electrics, reassembly of door internals, installation of windows, painting to seat frames, recovering of seats and replacing of internal panels are items still outstanding; not so much more to go!

Please feel free to get involved in the renovation. Everyone can do something; help and training given where necessary and it is very satisfying seeing the plan come together!



The trolley on 18th December 2011

HOUSING THE TROLLEY

Application has been made to the Municipality to use a part of the Waste by Rail Depot to store the machine when we move it from Ron Hollis's workshop.

CABSIDE PLATES FOR SALE

Member Geoff Hall has confirmed that he has disposed of all his cabside number plates and has thanked The LOOP for advertising them. Only a pleasure Geoff!

If any Member has railway memorabilia for disposal please contact us with a view to advertising it in The LOOP

REGULAR DONATION PAYMENTS

Following the suggestion by several Members that regular small(er) donations be made to boost funds for the renovation of the trolley we can confirm that these amounts are being gratefully received. Some find it easier to make donations this way.

As with all and any donation, large or small, they are very welcome indeed and have ensured, so far, that we have been able to progress the rebuilding phase without taking on any big loans.

The next, and hopefully the last, significant rebuilding expense will be the refurbishment of the seats so please keep those donations coming in!

Banking Details

Friends of the Choo-Tjoe, Absa Bank Limited, Account number 925-714-4488, Branch code 632 005

PUMP TROLLEY

During last year we were offered an opportunity to acquire a pump trolley.

Successful negotiations were concluded and the machine is now stored, albeit temporarily, at the workshop of Bodge Engineering . Many thanks to Ron Hollis for his continuing help and support.

Although in reasonable condition, some renovation work will need to be done to make it presentable.

No plans have yet been made regarding this machine we must complete the Wickham trolley first but if you have any ideas regarding its future use or would like to be involved in the work please contact Fraser on 044 382 4012.

DONATIONS OF MEMORABILIA

When Erica vacated the Outeniqua Tea Room at Goukamma Station at the end of September 2011 she very kindly donated several items of railway memorabilia to FCT. The items included various pieces such as spanners, a three aspect lamp, chair screws, some books together with local Goukamma photographs.

We much appreciate this donation by Erica; it could well form the nucleus of a museum collection!

FCT has also been promised a semaphore signal and two locomotive chimneys if we can recover them from a now dead preservation scheme.

If anyone else has any railway related items which they would like to go to a good home please consider donating them to Friends of the Choo-Tjoe.

Fraser Howell.



Class 24 crossing the lagoon in Januray 1985

Committee Members of Friends of the Choo-Tjoe were recently invited to attend several informal meetings with a small group of Dutch visitors.

The group, who prefer to remain anonymous, comprised both business people and museologists with interests in both aircraft and railway preservation.

We were able to explain the present situation to the visitors with regard to possible reopening and they were shown various parts of ‘our’ beautiful railway icon. They also saw some of the damaged areas that will need to be repaired before the line can be used again as a railway.

The visitors in turn explained how working preserved railways were set up and organised in Holland and made suggestions on how our quest to reopen the line could be strengthened.

The committed interest shown by this group in the George to Knysna line was greatly welcomed by Friends of the Choo-Tjoe and proves that interest in ensuring that the line is reopened is not only important to followers and enthusiasts on the Garden Route and South Africa but has supporters world wide.

Fraser Howell

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1st Annual General Meeting of the “Friends” will be held in the activities room at Knysna Public Library on Tuesday 20th March at 1600 hrs. Details will be sent to all members nearer the time.

Most of your committee will be standing for re-election but anyone is free to offer themselves as committee members. We particularly need someone to look after publicity and public relations. If you feel you can spare the time, get in touch with the Secretary, Kees Estie at friendsofthechootjoe@telkomsa.net

And remember, you can only vote if you are a paid up member.

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