



## OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

### HILTON STATION

The Hilton station revival project started in February 2011. This came about through complaints from the community police forum and police regarding the deteriorating site, vagrants, drinking in public and general urban decay.

An email was sent out on the local ratepayers data base and there was a resounding call in response to save the station, loco's and heritage. A public meeting was called and hosted by the local Hilton Hotel. A presentation of the logistics and issues per Transnet In running these trains was presented. There was thereafter a unanimous decision taken to continue to save the assets and preserve the area and it's history. The public then started nominating persons onto the committee. I think it is probably the first time in history in SA that people not associated with steam preservations have been brought on board a committee of this nature. As with Reefsteamer, USR, FoAR etc, it has always been just train enthusiasts that have got together to do whatever it has taken to preserve steam.

So on our committee of 10 (now 9 as 1 person has just resigned due to a move to JHB) we have got 3 people who have been involved in the preservation arena previously. Added to that, a couple of business people and local residents. Thus this becomes very much a community driven project as opposed to just some steam fanatics trying to save a dying history.

Meetings were held to plot a way forward. We have come up with a business plan and have opted to become a Public Benefit Organisation as opposed to the rest of the clubs that are registered as section 21. The reason for this is that it is a community driven project and a better chance of obtaining funding for job creation and sustainability. The basic business plan leads towards developing the station area into a tourism site and museum. Some commercial activities would also be looked at, so that the area is open 7 days a week and generating an income with the trains then becoming a secondary but supporting attraction.

To date we have met with the Mayor of the local municipality who is very supportive as there is no IDP,LED for this area. The business plan has been submitted. A board of directors has been appointed. The details of the respective people on the board of directors are being submitted with our registration documents, which will thus be Hilton Steam Heritage Association. Further to this we are submitting documentation to AMAFA to get the assets protected.

At this stage there are sufficient loco's available for preserving. To date just as a few volunteers have made it possible to get boiler certificates for the North British Tank as well as the crane. Coaching may be a greater issue but we hope to resolve that. The items and pictures below give a brief history and the assets at the station currently.



Hilton station is situated north of Pietermaritzburg on the original N G R mainline. The station was built in 1882. The station consists of the main station building and a goods sheds. Hilton Station has a slightly curved platform. The main building houses a museum.

The goods shed houses several model layouts which is open to the public on Saturday mornings.



The station yard consists of a mainline and 2 loops, plus a couple of dead end lines. There is still 2 kilometers of mainline remaining towards Sweetwaters and in the opposite direction towards Cedara, a distance of five and a half kilometers, where the branch line joins the main Durban to Johannesburg line.

There is a section of line about 300 meters where the sleepers and track have been stolen. Sleeper replacement on the line will also be necessary.

Hilton was at one stage home to locomotives nos. 15F 3052 – 19D 2269 – S2 3778- GF 2380 – All that remains are locos No 329 + 314 H2's – NBT ERPM No. 6, 696 19AR – 1402 19B – 1963 15AR – 1276 1 Class plus 36Ton Cowan Sheldon crane.

### **H2 314 WHICH HAS ALREADY HAD A COAT OF PAINT**

One H2 and the 1 class seem to be the next loco's to restore and would be unique in SA as the various clubs seem mainly to be focusing on the 19,15 and 24 classes.





The H2 and 1 class have received a coat of paint at this stage



15AR 1963



**19AR 696**

The existing loco's will be painted as money and time is available. The Class 1 has been painted and is staged on the mainline next to the platform with two short 4 wheeled trucks coupled to it. The steam crane is staged in front of the goods shed, the NBT is in a dead end next to the station.



**THE COWANS SHELDON CRANE 184 WHICH HAS BOILER CERTIFICATE**



**DOUBLE HEADED Natal Railway Museum STEAM TRAIN ENTERS HILTON OUT OF THE MIST. EARLY 90'S**

There are obviously still negotiations which need to take place with Transnet and other parties and are still in the early stages

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