

1). SHUNTING OUT THE NO.1 ROAD:



S01 – When the magical melody of the dual tea horns blow, a really smart shunting driver parks his kettle closest as to where the other kettle happens to be, in this case, opposite the cloak rooms more or less in line with No.3046's cab.



S02 – Here's the view of the big coal-fired kettle waiting outside the windowed domain of the small gas-fired kettle. This cloak room area is going to be opened up soon, when we start disposing of derelict and unused storage lockers.



S03 – 15F 'J9' falls foul of that unwritten Reefsteamers law, that tea breaks are not finished until the rusks are down to the crumbs and orphaned bits of muesli. She is still regal here, but as you can see, is starting to get a tab impatient!



S04 – 15F No.3046 pulls out a rake of coaches. Although most of the load is moving upgrade, the loco is actually starting a mild downer. Note that she isn't in full reverse gear, according to the position of the canted radius rod.



S05 – Viewed in the space between the Shedman's Office and the Forge House, 15F No.3046 pushes into the crossover and into the running shed's bypass track. The plate leaning on the press is a coach's battery bay cover.



S06 – The coach with acne is the 'Sandstone Sleeper', and the white-heads are paint applied over the recently welded patches. Once the No.1 road is cleared out and its tracks serviced, the body work will recommence on this coach.



S07 – A rather shabby looking 15F No.3135, the so called 'Springs F,' is out in daylight (Albeit cloudy) while the coaches retreat. At the moment, 'Shunt' the Smudger is a bit distracted by an car train passing by on the high irons.



S08 – Nothing quite like a ride in the tender during a shunt! Fireman Victor is doing OK with 1100kPa on the dial and glasses at $\frac{3}{4}$. Note the surviving diesel supply pipes on the columns, as well as the hexagonal 4kph speed limit sign.



S09 – Another tender shot chugging downhill and having safely ducked the water tower's spout and the soggy sock. Note that the 'Hangin' Tree' has already started to busily bud out, in firm be-leaf that summer is finally on the way.



S10 – Salt n' Pepper commin' right at ya! Two vertical boilers for the steam cranes head in for some welcome cover. This is Rnng. Shed Road No.2, one of the 2 tracks assigned to diesels, and you can clearly see how the rails were raised to provide clearance under traction motors.



S11 – Poor old 15F No.3016 'Gerda' is pulled out. She has No.2914's firebox problem twice over. She is unlikely to run again until we get Hott-Nutt's 15F 2914 and Dave Shepherd's 15F 3052 'Avril' running again. Then we'd rather get the 12AR, then 15CA, then 12R back in steam.



S12 – Shunter Smudge is watching for the rear bogie to clear the points blades without having the train go too far down the eastern grade. Fireman Victor did NOT have the injector on with the water rising in the glasses with the downhill cant – that's just the steam leaking on a cool day.



S13 – Just to freak out our overseas friends with their boring 4ft 8½ inch gauge sledge-irons, how's this for a classic Cape Gauge overhang shot? Notice the point blade stretchers are painted white. The theory is that it makes it easy to see if they have broken or have been removed.



S14 – Class 15F No.3016 'Gerda' trundles gloomily back to bed after a brief sojourn under a grey sky. This locomotive was deliberately stripped by us. Many of her parts were used to get No.3046 'Janine' going, and the leftovers were systematically removed and locked away from theft.



S15 – Putting 15F No.3016, the Pepper-Potted DZ and Uncle Wilfred's water bottle away would be the last move. Everyone had had enough. The fellows in the background checked the tracks, scotches, handbrakes and the like.



S16 – Although looking pretty knackered, 15F No.3135 is known to have a fairly good boiler and could be a candidate for future restoration, once we get some smaller engines running. We were using the coaches as handles to reach into those sidings and spread the weight out a bit, rather than have two heavy locomotives coupled together

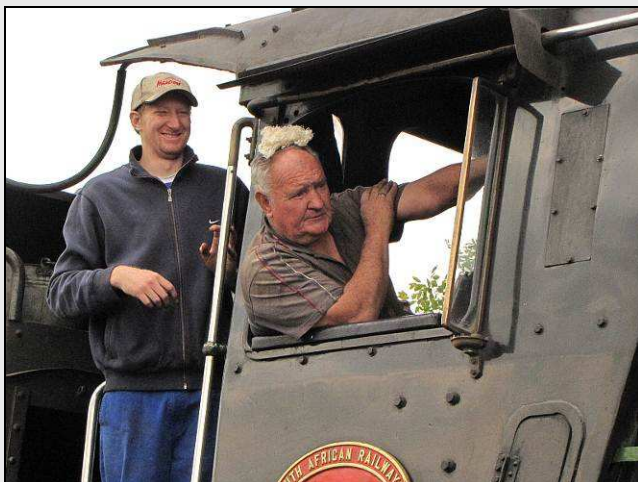


S17 – Right, we're done. Time to roll the cracked old anvil off the yard rails and put her away for the week. Bit of an improvement over the previous picture, don't you think?



S18 – Wearing a crown of leaves, like the Roman Senators of old, Class No.3046 'Janine' undergoes a still-early fire dumping. The unblown and Victorized fire was only gust a little thick from a whole day on the shunt, but it was basically just lots of ash with just a bit of kibble.

2). 15F CAB SCENES:



C01 – Hott-Nutts Hoddi sees to it that the Depot Joker gets ‘punked.’ The heat rising from Oom Attie de Hekke’s cranium is being used to dry out some used cotton waste. Attie is drawing ‘release’ vacuum to get the brakes off.



C02 – Oom Attie passes James Thomson (To be precise, ‘Thomson’ without a ‘p’, as in Venezuela), who is just about to start blowing sarcastic kisses at the cab. The two hack playfully at each other all the time, but they are good mates.



C03 – For training and coal economy, the Mini-Mienie was restricted to hand firing, which he thoroughly enjoyed. But he didn’t bother to trim the coal down for easier reaching. I took pity on him and trimmed some coal after this photo.



C04 – We have two preteen youngsters as regular visitors but both are notoriously camera shy. I successfully caught Gabriel Blore (Step-son of Smudge) in an unguarded moment and also not sending messages on his cell phone!



C05 – A more general view of a rather sooty 15F cab. You can see the effects of a blower-less ‘opsteek’ in two sooty updraft streaks on the regulator cross-shaft, the blackened stoker jet gauge and a nicely blackened lubricator.



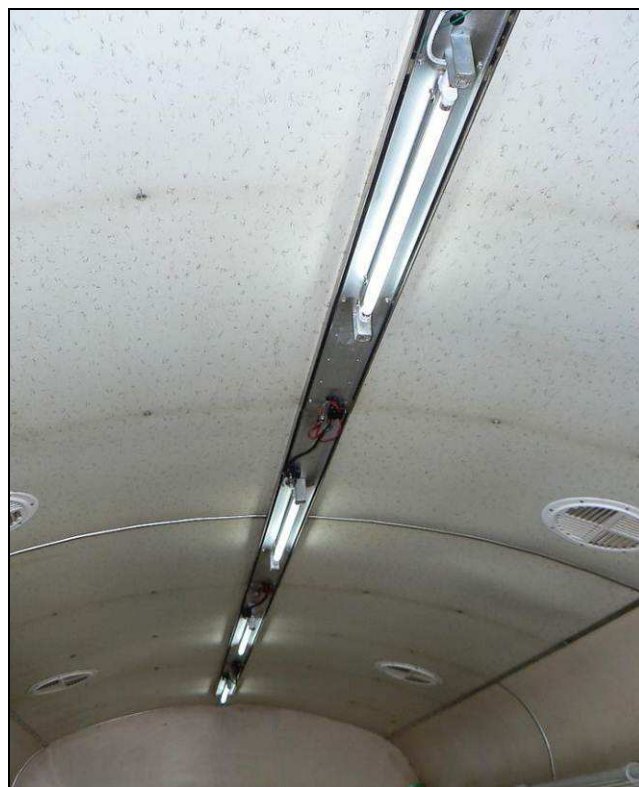
C06 – A new charge of coal has taken up nicely, visible through the inspection ports on the spreader table’s atrium. There is often a bolt placed in one of these to temporarily change the spread without having to adjust the steam jets.

3). LIGHTS FOR COACH NO.25073: ('DUSTY' THE SEMUMA COACH.)

All pictures in this section were by Aidan McCarthy.



L01 – Something to do on a cold, rainy, totally miz day – get under cover with some friends and work together to fix up some passenger coach lights. The coach gang roped in extra volunteers and eventually a production line was set up to do the entire coach in one session.



L02 – Here are the new lights hooked up and all glowing with pride on a test run. They do, admittedly, look rather bare here, but the trapezoid intermediate channels (that hold the translucent diffusers and originally hid the ballasts) are not yet in place.



L03 – This project involved a removal and total strip-down of all the old luminary bases and mounting of entirely new fittings, connectors and hardware. Alan and Gordon had to electrically trace the original wires and in classic Union Carriage and Wagon fashion, the wires were all the same colour! (Yellow)

Some of those base plates have rusted and need to either be buffed up or painted to provide decent reflectors.

Seen in the photo from left to right, Josh Wood, Jeremy Wood, Alan Lawton, Johan Breydenbach and Robert Cousins. New member, Lucas, was not in the picture.



L04 – A close up of one of the fittings. The 14W flourescents run with integrated inverters and thus do not require external starters and ballasts. We have found that even the inherently more rugged 220V ballasts and starting gear fitted to the other coaches tend to be a bit unreliable in the rigours of railway service. The original 110V gear running from DC-AC inverter sets, is even worse after several decades of use. (We don't use them anymore.)

These tubes are fitted on an experimental basis and were organized by Cousin Rob. If they prove reliable, or easy to swap out, when 'Dusty' is in revenue-earning work, we will gradually start converting the other coach light fittings to this technology when they come in for their service.

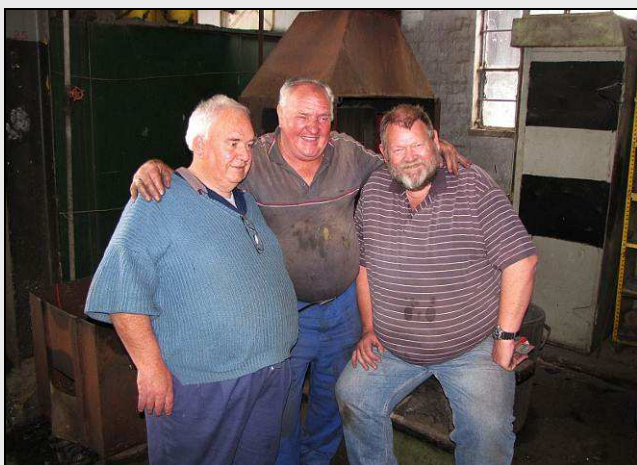
4). AROUND THE DEPOT:



T01 – You can slap our mothers and kick our puppies, and get away with it – but don't you DARE stop us from having tea! A substation cable that was hacked in an attempted theft meant we had to have our tea fired by gas today.



T02 – Oom Attie supervises Coenie as he makes tea with individual baggies instead of using the pot! It is traditionally the younger greasers and stokers who get the tea duty, but yours truly, as the camera man, often gets 'bagged' as well.



T03 – Three portly gentlemen pose in the forge. A remarkable thing about being active in steam preservation is that it brings people together from all different walks of life – such as these friendly fellows who each have very different lifestyles, challenges, memories and skill-sets.



T04 – A classic Reefsteamers gravel-hound piccie. This scrofulous mutt is snoozing away quite happily in spite of a nearby generator van roaring away, and shunting going on in the yard. Notice, as an added touch and totally unposed, the large chunk of coal parked right in front of the sniffer.



M05 – Some of the money collected from the recent Open Day is being put to good work. This is just a part of the extensive trench work that has just been dug to insert a new, underground and properly specified water main! By the time you read this, pipework will have been installed.



M06 – Never mind the shunting, what about the herd of wild toolboxes a-roaming free on the range? The guilty parties were Lawton, Bennett and McCarthy. The fourth toolbox was found with 'liberated' RS tools which were set out for pick-up at the fence, presumably by a former staff member.



T07 – Taking after his Granddad le Roux, young Victor settles down, lights up his 'twak' and sneaks a few puffs on his pipe after tea. Little did the poor little sod know then that would be his last smoke break for the day and he would later have to be content with coal fumes.



T08 – And this is the reason why! A certain 'ou stoute' of a 'spoorie' decided to shred some squished tea bags and add some Ceylon Herb to Victor's tobacco to make for a unique smoke! I was wondering if I could read Attie's future in those leaves, or does that only work in the bottom of a cup?



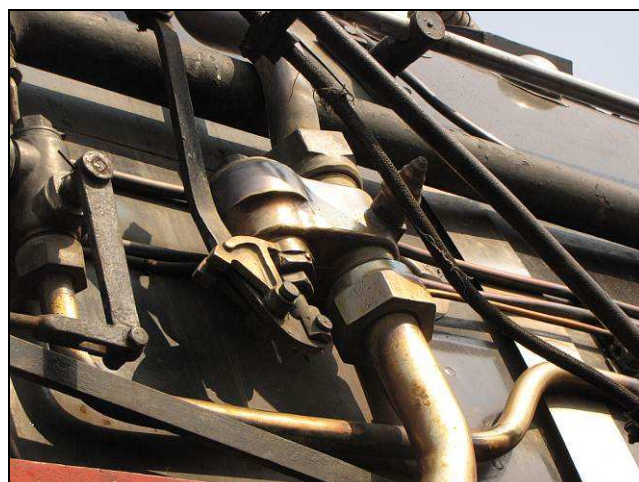
T09 – The tea trolley and a pair of coasters. These are surprisingly useful around the yard. The middle coaster is actually a man-powered pump wagon sans the lever and ratchet. However, it still has the reduction and axle gears.



T10 – A pair of newly-revealed coupling rod knuckles – dumped aside and long-hidden on the normally occupied siding. Note the sharp profile between the pin boss and the tongue – not great engineering but seems to have worked!



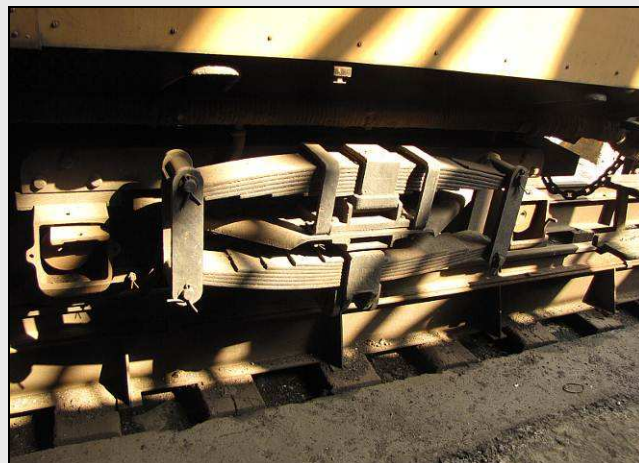
T11 – The same components on 15F No.3135 – hangin' a bit loose without the bronze bushings. A loco being shunted like this makes a metallic gritty hissing sound. This coupling rod was still attached to the other wheels though, so no danger of it dropping off from the shunt!



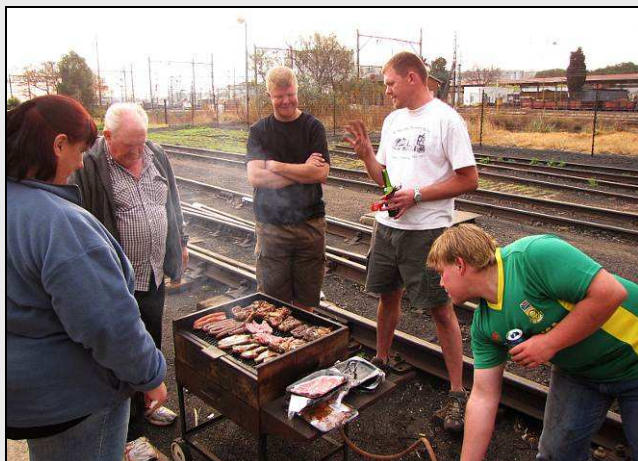
T12 – No matter how many times you look, there is always something new to notice on our Big Bessies. Check out the conical finial capping the mounting bolt for the RHS Sellar's valve on 15F No.3046. The scruffy braided 'hose' in the front is the signal cable for the speedometer



T13 – The axle packing project of a few weeks ago, now seen in daylight. There is still a fourth axle (and two front bogie axles) on a service track within the Running Shed. The area behind is the old sand bunker, although we draw our traction sand from a pile of white builder's sand stored and kept dry within the covered Forge House.



T14 – Quite an amazing vintage bogie suspension with a pair of opposing semi-elliptic leaf springs as a rather bouncy secondary and (hidden) coil springs as a primary suspension on the bolsters. The guys are collecting coach stats on FaceBook and this is a Type E13 2nd Class mainline coach built in 1936.



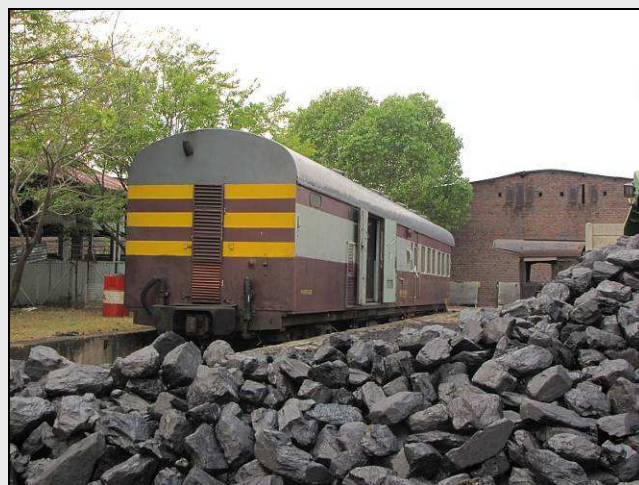
T15 – Gormet or Gourmands? An early evening braai before an evening slide slow. (Slow, as the slides weren't working!) A freshly scrubbed and changed Mini-Mienie is now a fireman of a different kind, opening up the LPG gas.



T16 – Whoa! Ease up on the stoking there dude! Actually, this braai was more of a meat warmer. We achieved more cooking on the fat-flares than we did on the gas jets! But the braai is usually quite cooperative in the expert hands of Johann Coetzee!



T17 – The Staff and Baggage van, type GD-1 and one of only 20 made and the only one currently serving in preservation, stands duty in the coal dock as a stand-by generator for the 15M shops.



T18 – Nestled amongst the coal. The main electrical cable turned out to have been hacked with a pick axe and not actually stolen. It has since been replaced and encased in concrete. So, the lights are back on again!



This Depot Report was compiled by Mr. Lee D. Gates on behalf of Reefsteamers Association NPC.
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