



W01 – I recently sent out an email seeking volunteers for the 'Locomotion Coach' project. However, since then I was informed that we are planning to convert the Bar Coach's store (above) and possibly the toilet area into a kitchenette to heat up and serve warm foods.

It will be a cheaper and quicker interim solution compared to 'doing the Locomotion', while the old catering coach has been staged for servicing and essential repairs. Chairman Dennis suggested the bar coach idea last Saturday.

We don't quite know yet what is required, as the catering requirements will be discussed in detail this weekend.

The job will most likely involve carpentry work for shelves and cabinets, a hot water geyser, perhaps a larger sink and some plumbing work. We will let you know ASAP and ask for assistance. (Pic - 19 Nov 2009.)



W02 – The new Bar Coach kitchenette project and the Sleeper Coach upgrade projects are higher priority now, but we would still like people to commit to helping us with stripping and repainting the 'Locomotion' coach's interior. Unfortunately, the current pink paint job is so bad and roughly textured that it actually has to be removed before repainting.

It is not a cosmetic issue – the rough paint actually grazes your skin and it will be nigh on impossible to keep clean.

This coach needs a team of people to strip out the dining furniture and then to carefully remove the aluminium strips after recording their locations. The entire coach interior needs to be stripped, which will require a mixture of machinery and hand sanding.

(Pic – May 2012.)



W03 – Most of the conversion work done on the Sleeper Coaches by Setimela was shoddy and much of it is being corrected. Philipp Maurer took a few weeks off work and flew over from Switzerland to get this project started. (He is also heavily involved in marketing the November Tour.)

Current work involves stripping out the poorly done, open sided showers in the Silver Class and also the garish vinyl flooring from the Gold Class coach. The Silver Class Coach bunks are also being worked on to revert them to the original one-sided double-decker SAR arrangement. People in the lower beds could not turn over and the bunks were obstructing the sliding doors into the ensuite bathrooms. There is lots more to do – a whole FILE full of jobs. **We are calling for sustained assistance to continue this project, as Philipp will be leaving for home soon.**



W04 – 12AR No.1535 'Susan' was reported to be blowing within the smoke box with the regulator open. The problem turned out to be a perforated superheater element. Unfortunately, it was in the top row so the three elements below had to be taken out as well. Conveniently, the smokebox front plate did not have to be removed.

While the 12AR 'Susie-heaters' are well aged in general, this one had been hammered into place, with the indents impinging into the hot gas flow and encouraging further erosion. It was ground-back and welded with relative ease.

Some of the superheater header T-bolts were found to be loose and were tightened, but we have missed a few. Luckily, she still ran OK on her last trip but another session in the smokebox is called for before Susie runs again.



W05 – The 12AR's left injector was running poorly, picking up hesitantly and only in the rear quadrant. The crew were struggling to keep the water level up in the hardest parts of the route. The injector was partially dismantled on 29 April and we found that the steam cones hadn't been replaced as they should have been in 2012. Luckily, the new cones were found stashed away in the brass store and refitted.

It didn't solve the problem though, and more investigation was called for a week later. A clue was that the injector would only work OK with the ash pan coolers running. The problem turned out to be that this water valve had been rotated 180 degrees within its body. It wasn't sealing and was lifting away its seat in operation. All is well now!



W06 – The 12AR was also treated to a freshly-cast set of fusible plugs as the fitted ones weren't standing up too well. The photo shows the hot, melted lead being poured into the core cavity, while the plug is being held into a mandrel with a semi-hemispherical cavity to mould out the domed head.

Susie's back plug still leaks from the threads and needs attention. It's a pain, as it drips into your cooking shovel!

Reefsteamers only has a few people certified to cast fusible plugs and Andrew King is one of them. As he was in South Africa for a few weeks, he took on the role of training Gordon Bennett further in this job. Gordon (and Jeandre) have recently been undergoing a lot of training in boiler work, certification work and this type of 'running repair.'



W07 – Class 15F No.3046 has had the front end of her left valve motion stripped due to excessive wear. Pictured is the eccentric bush that forms the bearing between the eccentric rod and the expansion link. When the locomotive was recommissioned 3 years ago, these bearings were incorrectly made from plain old brass instead of the proper phosphor bronze and they have worn badly in service. You can see the outer wear gap even in the reduced photo.

In the locomotive game, we often use the term 'brass' as a generalized term to refer to any brass or bronze type alloy.

James Thomson has been tasked to machine new bushes from Vesconite™. We have been using this synthetic material for over 6 years in some of our engines, with no discernible wear in main line service.

To not delay things after boiler testing, only the worn bearings will be replaced, so 15F No.3046 will run with Vesconite bushes on the left and ol' 'brassies' on the right.



W08 – The Sandstone Crowan Sheldon Steam Crane No.578 project is continuing with further stripping and analysis of the two dismantled feedwater pumps, many components of which are seen on the work bench.

The red-painted casting is a valve chest chamber that has been borrowed from the identical feedwater pump on the Booth Rodley Steam Crane No.96. You will recall that the original casting had burst, probably due to a crack.

The steam-driven duplex pumps, by the way, are made by Worthington Simpson Co.

James Thomson has recently joined the full time staff at Reefsteamers, finally choosing to retire after several years of erratic work opportunities. His domain is that of the workshop, while Jeandre and Gordon do the heavier stripping. (They dismantled the 15F's valve motion, for instance.)



W09 – Already being familiar with IC engines, Chairman Dennis Edgar was put onto servicing the 100HP Hunslet Taylor Shunter. ‘Andrew’ the Hunslet was treated to a fuel filter service and a much-needed oil change.

The picture is of the primary fuel filter showing some bad sludging due to water contamination of the diesel fuel. The condensate cock was also disabled and was found to be bunged up with hessian threads. It was probably leaking fuel at one time and somebody ‘fixed’ it.

The finely sieved copper filter element was taken home for brazing as it was coming loose from its end caps, and Dennis has medium-sized brazing equipment available from his model railway activities.

Unfortunately, the diesel injector pump is already a bit worn and it leaks diesel fuel into the crankcase. (Via the gear drive chamber.) So, we have to keep a careful eye on the constantly rising engine oil levels, and also the resulting lower viscosity of the diluted lubricant.



W10 – Now that he is retired and his bad leg has improved, Coen Pretorius has taken on the task of maintaining and expanding the Depot’s Gardens. He enjoys the work, and it gives him the freedom to work all day barefoot.

Pictured is the second of two plant boxes being built around the bare concrete apron in front of the formal club house.



Freshly mowed and getting ready for a cold dry winter! Note the banana bushes growing along the fence. How did they ever survive in our depot? (Oom Attie planted that lot.)



W11 - The foliage on the T&P tree says that the autumn season is clocking over to winter. We have a whole dry season then before we need to fix the hail-damaged roofs, broken windows and the 15M shop guttering.

Gordon is currently investigating blocked workshop drains. Transnet are also working on a blocked sewer line that crosses our premises from the Diesel Depot.

Winter at Reefsteamers means Depot Open Day season. We are already starting to make plans and will be calling for assistance and allocating jobs soon. Along with the November steam tour, this will be one of our flagship events for the year.



W12 – One of the old Wheel Lathe gears leans tirdly against one of the Thule shapers in the late afternoon. We are still very keen to get the Wheel Lathe project going but for now, the workshops focus is on getting the 15F 3046 back into steam, getting the sleeper coaches upgraded and getting some semblance of catering facilities back onto the day trip train.

The wheel lathe gearboxes need to be reassembled and tested (human-powered) before being dismantled again and the gears sent away for hardening. As we need them for patterns, we will not scrap the worn, old gears until the rebuilt lathe gearbox is proofed and reassembled.



This Reefsteamers Waybill Newsletter was compiled by Mr. Lee D. Gates on behalf of Reefsteamers Association NPC. For observations, corrections and suggestions – email me at documenter@reefsteamers.com

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