Sandstone Estates Steam Railway News 9 January 2017



Highlights of the week!



















BSA Railcar Rides



The Festive season is quite a busy time for walking tours and trolley rides. On this excursion we had the BSA Railcar to entertain our guests on a unforgettable journey to Grootdraai.





At Grootdraai we stopped to breathe in the fresh Maluti Mountain breeze while clouds were building up over the Mountains.



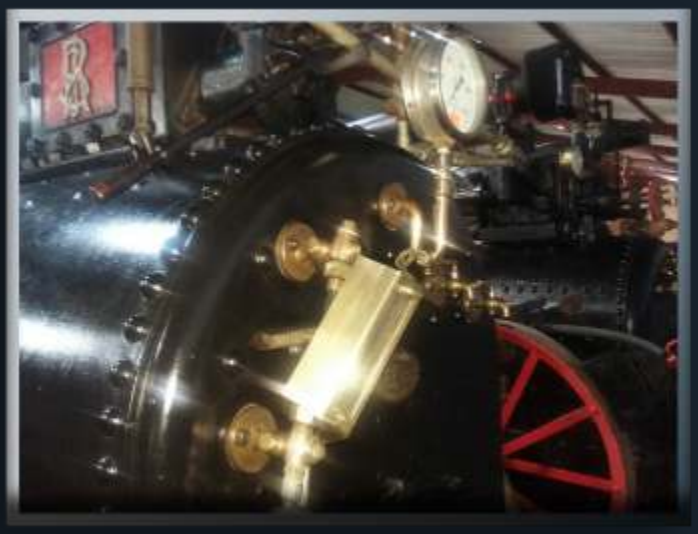




Cosmetic upgrade

This time of the year most of our staff are on leave so progress was slow with only Brian and Agnus on the team. This was the perfect time to attend to the cosmetic upgrading of the Steam Traction and portable boilers in the Vintage Shed.





All the boiler joints were serviced recently and Brian and Agnus then had a chance to clean all the brass parts and pipes on these magnificent machines.





Stationary and Traction Engines

We are not finished yet but soon will have all these machines in perfect mechanical and cosmetic condition.













NG Locomotive Boiler Maintenance



Avonside Sezella was the last Locomotive be attend to regards to the servicing of boiler joints and renewing of Gauge glasses. Below: The blow down cock being serviced and repacked with new packing rope.





Below left: The old gauge glasses removed
Below right: Steam and water ports were cleaned.





We now only have 4 Boilers for washout and are almost ready for the Boiler Inspection in February this year.

Our class NGG 16's numbers 153&88 together with the Lawley and Fowler will be washed out in the next week.

Traction & Portable Boiler Maintenance



The last two boilers in the Vintage shed boiler joints were serviced. These were the Sentinel Steam truck and the Steam Crane. All the gauges were calibrated and fitted back on every boiler.





Below: The calibrated gauges with the Working pressure on the orange stickers so that operators can know without looking around to find the Boiler test plates. The WP mark is also in neon orange on the gauges.





All the fire boxes will be wire brushed again before the Boiler Inspector arrives.

NG Locomotive Maintenance



It was a perfect time to attend to locomotive maintenance while everyone is on leave. All the locomotive valve and piston glands were packed with new packing ropes. It was quite a mission and a mountain ahead but one by one we tackled them.





The old ropes were very dry and perished. It is a trick to get the ropes out that were deep inside the stuffing boxes but every old rope just had to be removed.





Below left: Our bucket with all the different sizes of packing rope.





Below: The Peckett piston glands being packed.









NG Locomotive Maintenance

We have done this on all our locomotives except for the larger SAR locomotive still to be done. There are 3 little locomotives that we need to move to enable us to pack the valve and piston glands. These are Lawley L+R Valve/R piston gland, Barclay R piston/valve glands, Feldbahn R piston and the Arn Jung R Piston gland. We will move these next week and do them to complete this task.









All the gland studs were cleaned and lubricated before the glands and nuts were refitted. Ash and dust on the threads are not good and it does damage the threads over time therefore it needs to be clean.





Below: The Feldbahn being attended to.









Below: The Barclay.





NG Locomotive Maintenance













NG Locomotive Maintenance

The cleaning guy is following us as we proceed. He washes the motion and is removing all the dust, ash and grit from the slide bars and bushes. This is very important to keep the motion clean because the ash and dust makes grinding paste when mixed with oil and grease And results in expensive maintenance that can be prevented.





Johannes will take over this cleaning task when he returns from leave on Wednesday and all the locomotives must be cleaned in the same way.





Once we are finished with the locomotive maintenance we will move on and do the same on the Stationary and Traction Engines.

3’6” Sleeper Coaches



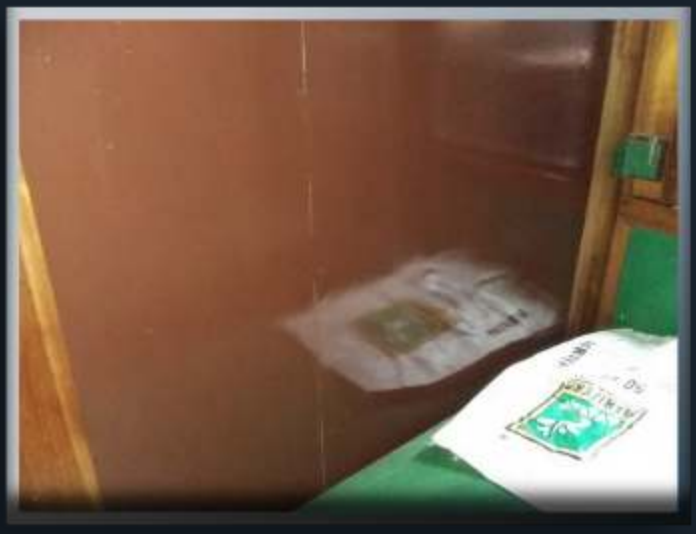
Ernest our Carpenter is constantly busy with the upgrading of our 3’6” sleeper coaches. He is now painting the brown and green walls inside the compartments and has fitted new windows in different coaches in the line.





Once this is done he will start building in bed bases where needed according to the sizes of thenew mattresses that were bought.





XC Tanker from Bloemfontein



Another restored XC wagon was delivered from the Bloemfontein workshop last week. This XC will be used with the Class NGG11.









DZ wagon Maintenance



Petrus is now back from leave and has continued with the maintenance of our DZ wagons. The wagons are lifted from the centres and the centres and side control friction plates are being greased. He also grease the couplers.







Outlook for next week!



Tasks

1.) Stationary & Traction Engine cosmetics
2.) Stationary & Traction engine maintenance
2.) Locomotive maintenance
3.) DZ wagon servicing
4.) Track maintenance
5.) Washout NGG 16 number 88, 153
6.) Washout NG 6
7.) Washout Fowler Steam locomotive
8.) 3'6" sleeper coach restoration
9.) Ratanga wagon conversion 1 (shockabsorbers)
10.) Vacuum gauge calibrations

Next Steam Report Date: 18 January 2017!



Blast from the past!



By Dave Richardson

25 Class 3540. This was the last condenser built in 1953 by North British. Many enthusiasts think that only 3451 and 3511 were not converted to 25NC but 3540 was retained at Beaufort West, where many were allocated, for preservation in the town itself. Sadly this never happened and the loco is shown staged at the old steam depot in November 1985. It was surrounded by Class 23 locos being cut up and suffered the same fate not long after the picture was taken.