# Photo charters return to Sandstone

SINCE the Covid-19 pandemic the number of international photo charters operated in southern Africa has plummeted. However, April saw leading South African heritage railway Sandstone Estates arrange a series of charters for a South African group, organised by local rail photography company Stimela Photographic Events. Both steam and diesel hauled trains operated on the 2ft gauge system during the Sandstone Easter Steam and Cosmos Festival, named as the local Cosmos flowers are in full bloom at that time of year.



**Ex-South African Railways Class NGG16 Garratt No. 113 hauls an afternoon passenger train through the Cosmos flowers on April 9, 2023.** JAMES ATTWELL



**No. E03 001 seen leaving Köln Hauptbahnhof on April 22 with the AKE 'Rund um Dom' tour; the 'Dom' being the Kölner Dom or Cathedral which is visible behind the loco.** STEVE CHAPMAN

# German electric pioneer back on the main line

THE first of Germany's famous Class 103 electric locos is owned by the DB Museum, owned by national rail operator Deutsche Bahn (DB), and has returned to regular charter train operation following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Loco No. E03 001 (later renumbered 103 001) was built in 1965 by Henschel, with Siemens electrical equipment, and was one of four prototypes which led to a production order for 145 Class 103.1 locos constructed by three builders for West German national company Deutsche Bundesbahn (also DB) between 1970 and 1974.

The 200kph six-axle design enabled DB to introduce its then revolutionary regular interval Intercity network in 1971.

The prototype locos were withdrawn first from 1986 onwards, while one became a 280kph departmental test loco. The production locos remained in use until withdrawals between 1997 and 2003, although three locos remained in use – one until 2020; by comparison one loco (No. 103106) was scrapped when almost brand-new in 1971 following a serious accident.

From the late 1990s new ICE high-speed trains replaced Class 103s hauling faster services and new Class 101 locos introduced from 1995-99 replacing the rest; Class 101 is now being run down and the first of that class (No. 101 001) is now also preserved in working order by the DB Museum.

# Polish diesel locomotive class bows out

THE last of the Polish Railways Class SU46 diesel locos will be withdrawn at the end of the year. Loco No. SU46-029 is the sole survivor of a class of 54 locos mostly built 1974-1977, with two later locos in 1985, by Cegielski in Poznan. The design was the last diesel loco to be produced before Poland made the transition to democracy and was mainly designed for passenger work equipped with electric train supply.

When new, Class SU46 locos replaced steam locos and older diesel designs but widescale electrification since the 1990s, plus service reductions and the introduction of DMUs, led to most of the class being withdrawn. Four locos were equipped with German signalling systems and permitted to work as far as Cottbus with international trains, although these ceased operation in 2014.



**No. SU46-029 at Piotrków Trybunalski while returning from the 21km Rogowiec freight branch as part of the Turkol four-day tour on June 8, 2023.** D.LANGHAM

Loco No. SU46 029 was used by Polish rail tour operator TurKol on a four-day tour in early June from Poznan to Hel, on the Baltic coast. The tour ran in June as originally it was scheduled for withdrawal by the end of June; this has now been extended to the end of December.



***BRONHILDE* HARD AT WORK IN ITS NEW HOME: As reported in the *RM* (June 2023, p66) Schwartzkopf 0-4-0WT *Bronhilde* has been moved from the UK to the Czech Republic and is now based at the Solvayovy lomy 'Skansen' museum located in the bohemian Kaarst hills, south west of Prague. It is seen at work during its first weekend in operation on April 30, 2023. During its time in the UK, the 2ft gauge loco resided at Bressingham Steam Museum, Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway and Richmond Light Railway.** SHAUN WALLACE



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