

EXCITING NEW BOOK ON THE SANDSTONE STEAM RAILWAY

THE SANDSTONE STEAM RAILWAY THE STORY CONTINUES

Sandstone Heritage Trust has just published a second book on the world famous Sandstone Heritage collection in South Africa. Following on from the success of the first book published in 2006, this 220 page hard back coffee table book in landscape format encapsulates, in words and photographs, the Sandstone Heritage Trust collection that nestles in the vast, rich agricultural grain and cattle Landscape of South Africa's Eastern Free State. This new publication illustrates the grit, determination and vision of the founders to save a representative cross-section of the transport history of Southern Africa. By virtue of its location, this living collection complements the beauty of the area with its 3.5 million year old Sandstone cliffs, lakes and snow-covered, cosmos-clad farmlands in the winter months.

The book documents the history of the Sandstone Heritage collection of transport relics from the days of European imperialism and empire building. Almost a generation back, the need by the then Transnet Heritage Foundation to secure a safe home for resources at a collapsing museum in KwaZulu-Natal saw Sandstone Estates being approached to rescue the exhibits. The embryo was 'alive'.

Over nine chapters, the glossy publication looks meticulously at the history of every single locomotive (both narrow and Cape gauge) as well as each piece of acquired rolling stock, coaches and dining cars together with other complementary heritage categories such as military vehicles, cars, trucks and buses, vintage tractors, earth-moving equipment all surrounded by the crops, flora and fauna of the extensive modern farming operation at Sandstone Estates.

The text is rich in recollections and memories of challenging

expeditions to rescue artefacts throughout South Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The time consuming negotiations that typify African politics makes this book more than a catalogue of assets. Almost without exception, heritage items saved would otherwise have seen the cutting torch or been lost to pervasive rust and neglect.

The collection has contributed to South Africa's tourist industry and community development in the local Free State area. European tour operators have brought locomotive enthusiasts and other transport buffs to experience the live, working railway on the farm by way of regular shows and open days. Huge agricultural fairs, record-breaking ploughing competitions and what has become known as the 'Sandstone experience' are featured in the book.

The book is a must for any heritage enthusiast and is available online on the Sandstone website: www.sandstone-estates.com. Click on the 'Online Shop' tab.

In the UK the book costs £29 including post and packing. In South Africa the cost is R795.00 including VAT and delivery. The book is available in the USA at US \$34. Delivery on quotation.

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Compiled by David Richardson.
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