



Henschel 0-8-OT Brigadelok 498 and Avonside 0-4-OT SEZELA No.3 with military vehicles and a vintage Chevrolet on show at Sandstone, 27 March 2012.
Photo: John Browning

locomotives and rolling stock. Overall the change has been very successful and HVR is quite happy with the result as are the passengers.
 Ian Willis, 10/13

OVERSEAS NEWS

WISCASSET, WATERVILLE AND FARMINGTON RAILWAY MUSEUM, Alna, Maine, USA

610mm gauge

A successful working bee was held over the weekend of 12-13 October with people working Friday through Monday. On Saturday, there were more than 80 people on hand. On Friday, about 50 were on hand, about 40 were around Sunday and 20 or so on Monday.

On Friday two large pieces of machinery were unloaded from flatcars. The first item was a pinch riveter, a machine to install rivets inside a tank or boiler. That item was hung from the ceiling over a disused lathe in the old shop. Later, after shifting a bunch of equipment around and clearing space in the shop, we unloaded an old bull riveter that had been modified into a brake for bending steel. That was unloaded onto a custom-made dolly. The balance of the day was spent helping to lower engine No. 9 (Portland 0-4-4 'Forney' 622 of 1891) down onto its wheels. This was done using manual screw jacks, and it took numerous re-sets of the jacks to bring it down. When it was safely down, it was rolled outside for photographs.

On Saturday, No. 9 was rolled outside again and switched from track one to track two in the shop.

Once inside, a swarm of volunteers began work. One gang began sorting out and installing the rear truck brake rigging, while another crew continued work on the loco's cab. A third team worked on the front end, drilling holes for rivets and bolts. A small team was gathered to work at installing the grate bearers and grates in the firebox.

Elsewhere on the property, a crew framed up a three-vehicle garage and got the roof on. Another crew did a lot of surfacing, lining and dressing track on the main line. Another crew surveyed the track layout and staked out the center line of all tracks. Last but not least, a crew of folks prepared meals for the volunteers throughout the weekend.

Wayne Laepple, 10/13

Stars of Sandstone, April 2014 Hoekfontein, South Africa

Most readers are already aware of Sandstone Estates in South Africa and the magnificent annual galas that are held there. Not only is there an extensive collection of 2ft gauge steam locomotives operating over the lengthy railway through the week-plus event, but many vintage road locomotives and traction engines, cars, trucks, buses, tractors and military vehicles are demonstrated too. Visitors are assured of a most memorable and enjoyable experience.

The visitor experience is excellent, with growing numbers of repeat international participants each year. Sandstone is a reasonable drive by road from Johannesburg or Bloemfontein. There is a selection of B&B and hotel locations within easy reach, and details can be supplied.

The 2014 *Stars of Sandstone* gala is being held from 12 to 21 April. Visitors may attend for the whole time, or for a shorter period, and family rates are available. A limited number of "footplate experience" places will be available for the first time, at a modest additional cost.

Some people may feel hesitant because of the distances involved or their unfamiliarity with the country. In this case, why not organise a group of friends to travel together? Perhaps you would like to be put in touch with others from Australia who might be happy to travel in a group (and may have already made the journey).

Each year, a number of Australians play a very important role by joining the railway operations staff to run the trains for the gala. Qualified/ accredited drivers, firemen, guards and controllers, either professionals or volunteers from heritage railways, may be eligible for this opportunity and for those involved there is usually accommodation available at the farm with board and lodging provided. If you are interested, please feel free to contact recent participant Graham Black on (02) 4955 1904 or wenbl1@bigpond.com.

If you are interested in attending and would like to find out more details of costs, accommodation, transportation options, the possibilities of shared travel arrangements, and opportunities for joining the train operating staff, please contact joannewest@btinternet.com or register an expression of interest online at <http://www.sandstone-estates.com/index.php/stars-of-sandstone-registration>

John Browning