



4th-12th May 2013

Surprise!! Another Newsletter?

1) Tragic news.

We were shocked to receive news on Wednesday (24th) that Laurie Kay had died of a heart attack in the Kruger National Park. Laurie is an aviation legend in South Africa and for those who were at the 1995 World Cup will never forget the experience of watching that 747 fly low over the stadium.

At age 6 Laurie joined the SA Air Boys Club in Malvern, Johannesburg and regularly rode by bike to Rand Airport to watch the flying. He was accepted for flying training by the Royal Air Force in 1967 and trained on Chipmunks and Jet Provosts. On his return to SA in 1970 he joined the SAAF, converted to Harvards and as an Instructor at CFS Dunnottar trained many pupil pilots who would shape the future of aviation in South Africa.

He joined SAA in 1974 and flew and instructed on all aircraft in service, On retirement in May 2005 he had logged over 23 000 hours of flying, but continued to fly recreationally, for the Harvard Club and SAAF Museum. He was a major and long-standing promoter and supporter of the Guide Dog Association in SA.

Laurie was a senior member of the Harvard Club. The Club has been in touch and the programme will continue as planned. In any event, there was going to be a standby pilot available to enable Laurie to attend part of our event.

Please support the Harvard Club. Their top pilots are all first rate professionals.

I am sure you will join all of us in extending our sincere condolences to Laurie's family in the event of his untimely death. We were all looking forward to spending time with him socially on the farm and we are very sad that we have been deprived of the opportunity of spending time with such an upbeat, buoyant, and experienced man as Laurie Kay.

2) Update Dakota DC3.

In the last Newsletter – Edition 8, we advised that there was a possibility of having guests fly down to the Stars of Sandstone in a DC3 and that we were waiting for a quote. We have received a few enquiries but we have run out of time to fill this aircraft and coordinate the logistics for bringing it to Sandstone. We have advised the enthusiastic DC3 operators that we will probably host a special

event on the farm for a full complement of DC3 passengers at some point in the future. We have so much on our plate that we do not want to give this wonderful old bird anything other than our full attention.

To those who enquired we apologise that it did work out as we had hoped but there may be an opportunity to put this together later in the year and will keep you informed.

3) Special arrangements.

We have quite a number of people attending the show with special needs. We are also assisting some people with transport. This essentially means that we coordinate a lift from somebody who is already coming from Johannesburg or Bloemfontein for example.

If you are coming down to Stars and you have space in your car we would appreciate it if you could let us know because we might have somebody in need of a lift. The numbers involved are small so no one needs to go out and hire a minibus!

If any of our visitors have any special needs or requests they need to let us know because we still have a few days to make arrangements to ensure you get the best out of your attendance at the event.

Peter Mole, our Train Controller, is offering a lift from Johannesburg to the farm on 2nd May should anyone need one. Please contact Peter direct on E: peter.mole@btopenworld.com, and copy Leigh Sanders on E: leighs@sandstone.co.za.

4) After dinner presentations.

As advised in an earlier newsletter we have arranged for a number of after dinner talks to take place for those who are interested in attending. The dates and subjects are below:

- (a) Saturday, 4th May – Talk by John Middleton entitled ‘Narrow Gauge in South Africa’.
- (b) Sunday, 5th May – Talk by Fraser Howell entitled ‘Let's get the Outeniqua Choo back on track’.
- (c) Monday, 6th May – Talk by Jean Dulez entitled ‘Railways in Southern Africa 150 Years - Double Feature’.

All talks will commence at 20h00 sharp.

We hope that the Railway enthusiasts will take advantage of the opportunity to learn from these experienced speakers. They have a depth of knowledge on the subject.

5) Interesting freight wagon.

Some time ago we picked up a wagon at Alfred County Railway which is illustrated below. We asked Charlie Lewis, who started the commercial version of ACR some years ago, to tell us more about it.

“It was designed to increase the payload/tare ratio of pulpwood trucks that we had already improved on ACR from about 1:1 in SAR days to 3:1 for a wagon of the same length by removing surplus stanchions and the thick steel end panels and widening the load from 1,6m to 2,6m. The longer wagon was made by welding in part of the underframe of a standard ST truck so that it could take 4 billets of timber instead of three. At the same time we rebuilt the bogies with roller bearings and tread-steering designed by the late Murray Franz - the rubber sandwich design by Murray produced the same benefits (reduced drag on curves and prolonged tyre life) as the Scheffel bogie

on SAR, at a fraction of the cost. The results were exceptional but no sooner had we proved the concept than SAPPI decided to switch to lorries.



The standard length of a pulpwood log was 2.2metres, with a tolerance of about plus 10cm and minus 20cm. ACR started out with cross-loaded billets but at Spoornet's insistence changed to length loading when we introduced piggy-backing between Port Shepstone and Saiicor. The long wagons were thus always length loaded. A billet was about 2.2m X 2.6 X the height of the stanchions which I can't remember but think it was 2.2m. If it was gum it weighed about 5.5 tons, if it was pine, about 7 tons so the payloads for the longer wagon were 22t or 28t."

6) The NG4.

Our feature locomotive this year is the NG4. It started at Alfred County Railway and ended up there, which is where we recovered it from at Port Shepstone.

We asked Charlie Lewis to give us a little bit of information on this rare locomotive.

"No. 16, class NG4 went to the Alfred County Railway when new in 1911. She was still there, shunting the yard at Port Shepstone when I first went there in 1952. She was still there in 1953 but the following year was gone. I remember her business-like exhaust beat, almost like a 15F working hard, which was quite startling coming from such a small engine. I later discovered that she had been bought by Rustenburg Platinum Mines where she was in regular service until the arrival of the Bagnall diesels c 1957 (the same ones acquired by Sandstone from ACR) - interesting that they all ended up at Sandstone.

About 1970 the NG4 was sold (donated?) back to SAR by RPM and for several years she was plinthed at the District Engineer's office in Krugersdorp. After Alec Watson was appointed Loco Foreman, De Aar he arranged for the engine to be transferred there for cosmetic restoration. In 1987 a narrow-gauge museum was set up by the late Alan Clarke at Humewood Road and the NG4 was sent there. When, early in 1994, ACR was awarded the contract to operate the Avontuur line we arranged for the engine to be transferred to Port Shepstone with the good intention of restoring her to working order. But before we could get going at PE the 1994 election took place and first thing the new government did was to annul our operating contract. This, coupled with a huge concession to road hauliers made by the new transport minister, Mac Maharaj (enabling our competitors to reduce their tariffs and squeeze ACR severely) put the restoration of #16 on the back burner. It never came off it, and you know the rest of the story. I have always been extremely glad that the engine was transferred to Lukas Nel and his team for a first rate restoration and that it is now safely at Sandstone."



Photo by John Browning

7) Pumpkins.

We planted pumpkins especially for this event and we have had a bumper crop. We were complimented last year on our pumpkins, which of course are very good for you, so you will find that pumpkin will be on the menu every single day as a discretionary option.

8) Maize harvest.

We are holding thumbs that some of our maize will be dry enough to harvest during the event. If so we will be loading B-Bogies with 10-tons of maize per truck. It will be slightly disruptive because it will probably happen on the main line but we will have four combine harvesters working so it will not take long to fill them.



Our photograph shows maize growing under the majestic Maluti mountains.

The Soya bean harvest is underway but should be nearly complete by the time guests arrive.



9) Music.

By popular request we have live music on both weekends during our event. You can look forward to listening to the music from a bygone era from the “2 Old Boys”.



10) Appointment of Safety Officer.

There will be a Safety Officer on duty throughout the event. We have had instances in the past where people have done stupid things and have damaged equipment etc. The Safety Officer will simply be on the lookout for anything that needs to be calmed down. This is not the beginning of the end whereby Health & Safety will shut down the event. This is just a precautionary measure because we have had overzealous youngsters in particular joyriding on some of our valuable items.

11) Soup.

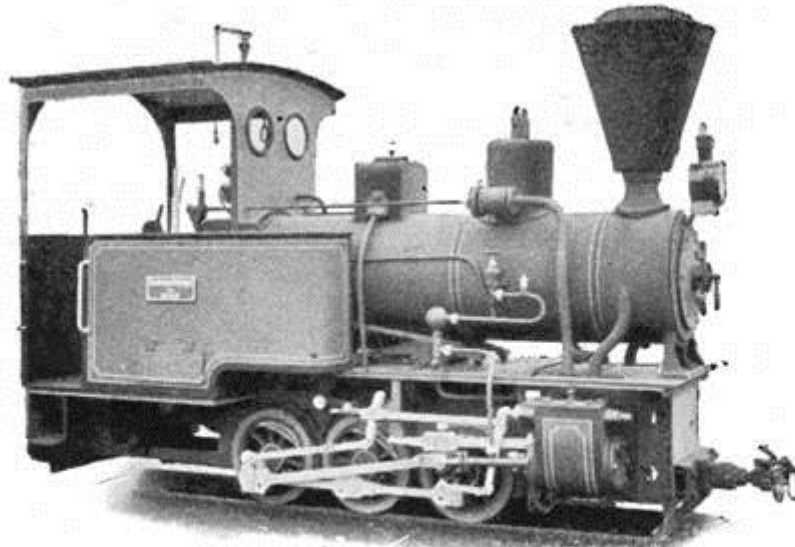
We have had more interest in our soup than in the Arn Jung locomotive that has recently been restored. Soup will be available from 09h00 until the bar closes from the Waenhuis kitchen

throughout the event. On different days we will have lamb and bean, bean soup (a Free State special – you have got to try it), butternut soup, mushroom soup, and chicken soup.

Please ask for Selina if you would like a cup of soup and she will give you a large mug of soup with a buttered roll. No one should leave our event undernourished.

12) Quiz.

Look at this works picture and tell us which locomotive this is in the Sandstone collection.



*3/3 gek. Tender-Lokomotive für Holzfeuerung
Spurweite: 600 mm — Dienstgewicht: 6,5 tons*

Thank you to Karlheinz Rohrwild for sending us the picture. He comments as follows:

“I received a O&K book about their 5000 built steam locomotive. Inside I found a pictures of our little 3/3 O&K wheeler. The only difference is, that it shows a 600mm inner frame instead of our outer frame. I hope it is useful for your work.”

Thanks Karlheinz, this type of archive information is invaluable, particularly to Lukas.

13) Update on web site.

The technical work carried out on our web site has now been completed. Our web site is now fully operational.

14) Aircraft matters.

We have had a lot of interest in the Harvard, the DC3 etc. In fact, the area that seems to have attracted the most attention has been the fact that aircraft will return to Sandstone again this year. For those Aviation enthusiasts have a look at the attached (The runway is wet.PDF).

According to Bruce Harrison, the pilots were as follows: Scully Levine, Arnie Meneghelli, Ellis Levine, and Stu Lithgow.

15) What more can you expect?

Here's two surprises. Chris Wilson, undoubtedly one of South Africa's premier John Deere vintage and classic car specialists, has been working hard over weekends to restore a John Deere 730 Diesel. These are sturdy, reliable, and great tractors to use. Consistent with Sandstone's policy she has been restored mechanically to a higher standard but with the cosmetics left more or less as is because she is more genuine like that.

A very nice long-wheel-based Land Rover has come into our possession which will be in use throughout the event as a support vehicle.



16) Brake van news from Welsh Highland Railway.

The following article appeared on the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railway web site recently:

"On 5/3/13 the ex-SAR ex-Sandstone brake van No.3172 was noted outside the Goods Shed looking resplendent with its new roof and paint job.



This westerly view (5/3/13) shows completed restoration of ex-SAR brake van No.3172 at Dinas. Click on the image to enlarge. This image is copyright Tony Baker and was taken on an Olympus digital camera. Image post processed using Zoner Photo Studio and displayed at 96dpi."

See also: <http://www.sandstone-estates.com/index.php/railway-heritage/39-railway-heritage/2851-press-release>.

17) Narrow Gauge World.

If you do not receive Narrow Gauge World magazine you should. It is a really outstanding publication and the current edition contains an interesting article on Sena Sugar, which was the source of so many spectacular Narrow Gauge locos. We are privileged to have so many in our collection.

David Joy has been doing a lot of research on this and we know that Narrow Gauge enthusiasts will enjoy reading it. The article appears attached and you can subscribe to the magazine by contacting subscriptions@warnersgroup.co.uk.

18) Laundry.

We have a laundry on the farm. Laundry bags are available at the laundry, together with laundry slips. Just fill in the slip and hand it to Vesile who is in charge. She will give you an indication when you can collect it.

Please note we would ask you to pay for laundry, which you can do at the bar.

19) Ladies excursions.

Reinette Wille, E: oxwagon@telkomsa.net, is in charge of ladies excursions. We are not too sure how many ladies will be attending at this point but we do have a number of items planned. These include a visit to Clarens, a visit to Ficksburg, as well as a visit to a number of country shops in the rural areas. We do like to support these because many of them are run by farmers wives and they do create jobs.

On Saturday, 11th May we have arranged a visit to the Anglican Country Fair and Art Exhibition on a very beautiful farm not far from Sandstone. The entry fee is R40 per person (£2.85). This includes tea and cake.

Reinette's phone number is +27 (0)82 397 8055. She would be happy to chat to you.

We have a minibus and a driver on the farm so transport should not be a problem providing the numbers do not get too excessive.

Reinette will be on the farm frequently during the event and she will have an opportunity to talk to the ladies.

20) Meeting HRASA.

A number of people have asked if there will be senior officials of HRASA (Heritage Rail Association of South Africa) at the Stars of Sandstone event this year. To the best of our knowledge the answer is no.

21) An opportunity to get your hands dirty.

To see this many locomotives as frequently as we are doing over such a protracted period is such a tremendous challenge. The fitters have to stay up most of the night to get the locos ready and there aren't that many of them. If you have experience in preparing locomotives for steam or if you are just interested in lending a hand and do not mind acting as a loco caretaker during the night please

let us know. You can speak to Lukas Nel on Tel: 082 990 0727 who will be on site. Alternatively you can speak to Stephan du Preez on Tel: 073 302 1447.

If you do not have your own overalls they are on sale in the shop.

22) Honey.



We have just bottled this year's crop of fresh farm honey. With cosmos and sunflowers to feast on the bees have had a happy time. Our honey has healthy ingredients designed to upgrade and stimulate your metabolism beyond measure.

We have plenty of stock. Please speak to Agnes in the shop. The honey is available at R45 per jar as illustrated below.

That's it, no more newsletters. The first guests are already here! An updated programme for trains is attached.

The Sandstone team

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