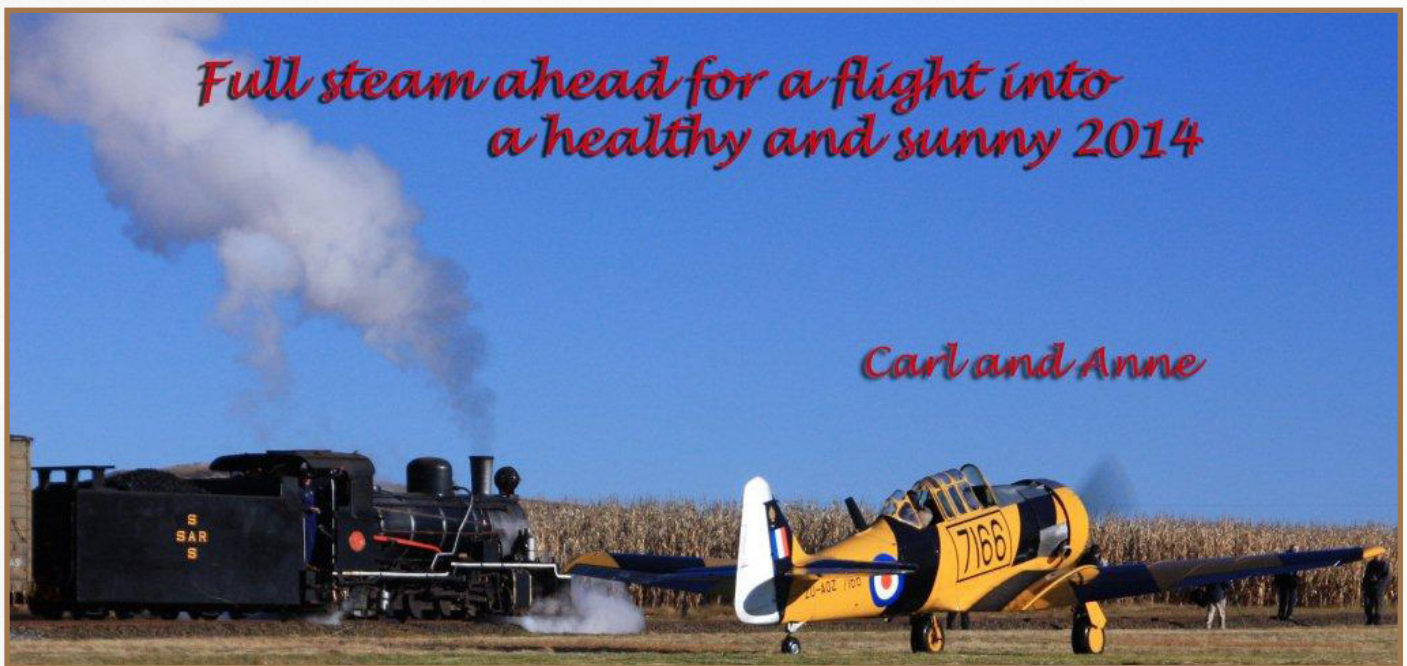




Stars of Sandstone

2014 12TH - 21ST APRIL 2014



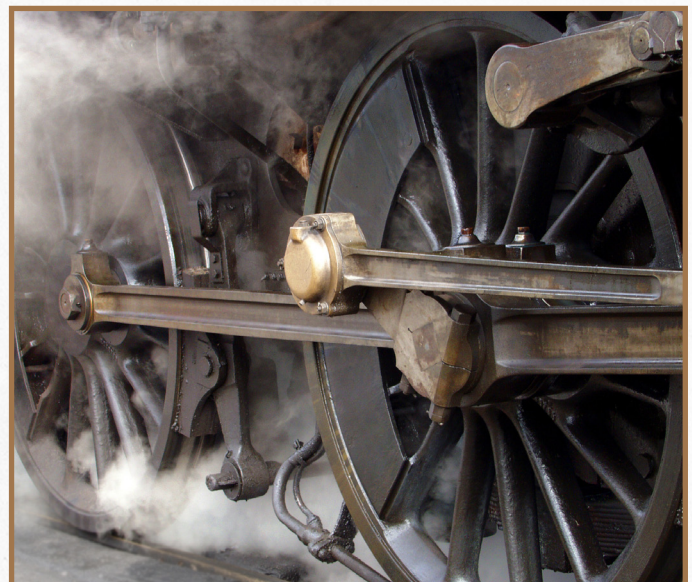
Carl and Anne Gootzen from Belgium have been to Sandstone numerous times. They sent us this delightful Christmas card which we thought we would share with all our readers and we join them in wishing everyone a very exciting and happy 2014.

SITUATIONS VACANT

Every year we have someone who kindly offers to be the Train Controller. Last year it was Peter Mole who did an excellent job. However, it is a tough job because of the hours involved.

We have decided next year to split the function so there will be a minimum of two Controllers but we would actually like to appoint a third one because even splitting the function into two can be quite hard work and generally prevents the Train Controllers from enjoying the other amenities of the event. If you are an organised person and you would like to assist by having radio contact with the crews to make sure the trains are where they are supposed to be at any one time please let us know.

If you would like more details on the function itself why not contact Peter Mole direct at Peter.Mole@btopenworld.com.



FARMING MATTERS

Our summer planting is now complete. We planted just under 3,000 ha of crops.

As a matter of interest this is how many plants are now in the ground:

Soya Beans – 263,400,000 • Sunflowers – 21,960,000 • Maize – 51,760,000 • Sugar Beans – 11,520,000



Speckled Sugar Beans – Sandstone Estates – January 2014



Maize as far as the eye can see on Sekonyela

THE OXEN

Our breeding herd of Afrikaner oxen is expanding steadily. We have a number of young oxen who have grown enormously in the last year and they will be hard at work during the show.

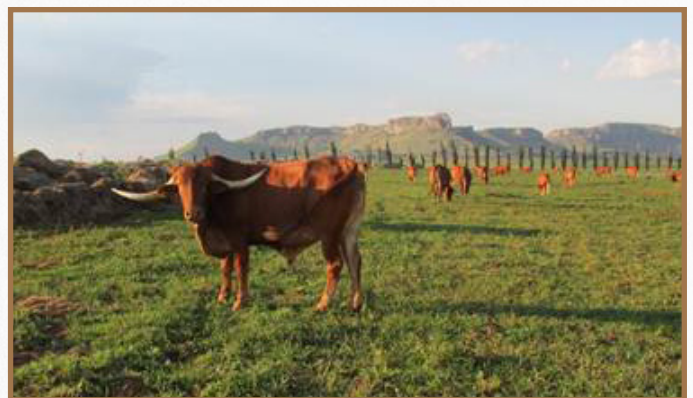


Visitors to our event probably don't realise that these oxen work every week of the year carrying out various chores.

At the moment they are collecting hay bales in fairly large numbers and bringing them to the main complex as we build our winter fodder stocks.



Picture by Errol Ashwell



A young Afrikaner ox on the farm

RSR INSPECTION REPORT - SANDSTONE ESTATES

The line and the railway have been declared as being in good heart.

[Click here to read more!](#)



VISITORS FEEDBACK

We have had the following contributions from past visitors to Sandstone regarding the way they would like to see the consists handled.

CONSIST SUGGESTIONS I

We have had some useful feedback while we will take note of in our planning.

‘Just a comment about building train consists for helping photographers taking pictures of the trains during Stars of Sandstone 2014.

Whether photographing real live or model trains, pictures always seem to look better when there is an empty flat car, a long as possible, immediately behind the engine, and then the gondolas, and then the box cars. Box cars and gondolas can be swapped if wanted, but having what seems to the eye like a large empty space behind the engine gives the impression of the engine being more “bigger” and “majestic” and “impressive” than it is, and it stands out more “prominently” rather than when just “Blending” seamlessly into a full size box car or caboose right behind it.

Looking at a picture like that the loco always seems to stand “out and Proud” a bit more, even though the rest of the train is still in shot and visible, but when the loco/tender is right up against the boxcars in the train, it kind of “blends in” and just loses that little bit of extra “impressiveness”. It’s like a Sherman tank or a Spitfire is a very impressive piece of equipment, but photograph a Sherman tank or Spitfire standing next to a Lancaster Bomber, and it seriously just looks like nothing special.

Trick the eyes into seeing the locos as bigger and more huge than they really are by surrounding them with “Less” stuff.

Just some of my personal observations from 30 years as a magazine photographer and 40 years as a rail fan.’

*Gary Smith
Rider Magazine*

CONSIST SUGGESTIONS II

‘I thought the way you had the wagons loaded when I was at Sandstone in 2012 was what one would expect trains would have been loaded in the glory days of the railways. Not every thing would have been tarped as the purists seem to expect. I am sure farm machinery including tractors, ploughs, harvesters, hay presses and rakes etc would have gone on flat wagons. In fact a photo is more interesting with the machines visible and not covered. The railway purists (in Aust) can be an odd lot so perhaps that is universal. If you load the wagons as of 2012 with a mixture of general freight that should give a variety of photos as the trains were loaded and not a line of tarped wagons.’

Robin Gibb



One reader sent us this photograph and suggested we put some logs on our flats. A fantastic idea but the closest we could get to finding trees of this size would be to make them out of glass fibre? They would look good though



MILITARY SECTION

Please be aware of The Classic Military vehicles Newsletter.

To subscribe click here.





CLASSIC MILITARY VEHICLES

Our Military programme is developing well. Essentially the Military section of the event will be a joint venture between the Sandstone Heritage Trust and the SA Armour Museum in Bloemfontein. A number of senior officers from the Museum will be coordinating all activities.

People interested in driving or riding in Military vehicles should let us know that they are interested so we can begin to formulate ways of allowing them to take maximum advantage of what will be happening throughout the event.

Finally, if you have not seen this YouTube clip perhaps you should **click here right away:**

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES AND EVENTS WITHIN THE EVENT

1. Our Fowler loco, Sandy, no 14316 and our new yet to be introduced to the world Avonside no 1624 both turn 100 next year.
2. 2014 is the 150th anniversary of the birth of Herbert W. Garratt (born 8 June 1864) - whose ideas led to the Beyer-Garratt. All 4 of our working Garratts will fly the flag and we will have a commemorative event
3. 1914 sees the commencement of WW1. Good opportunity to combine Rail and Military Heritage in commemoration.



A Spoornet Class 91-000 on the Avontuur Railway near Humansdorp

USEFUL LINKS

This link provides a useful overview of the entire SA NG scene. However it's a bit woolly with regards to what has actually survived.

Two-foot-gauge railways in South Africa - Wikipedia

"At the beginning of the 20th century, two-foot (610 mm) narrow-gauge railway lines started playing a significant role in transporting various agricultural..."

Click above to read more.

TRACK NEWS

The new passing loop at Hoekfontein under construction



INTERNATIONAL TOUR GROUPS

An easy way to enjoy Stars 2014 is to book with

Geoff's Tours.



COACH ACCOMMODATION

We have had a no of queries re this. Our Mainline coaches are now all under cover and are being refurbished.

We will invite use by volunteers shortly.

Please note that our Main facilities are some way away so this if more for single Spartan types.



These coaches were removed from the area below which has been re-engineered with a new passing loop and storage line. The overall vista is greatly improved with the Cape Gauge coaches out of the way.



WAGON NEWS

At least one of the early Rustenburg Platinum Mine Ballast wagons (we have 4) will be ready by Stars 2014.

These were recovered in a derelict state from the Sanrasm site a few years back.

If any one has any info on these or hopefully an Archive photo we would be keen to receive it.



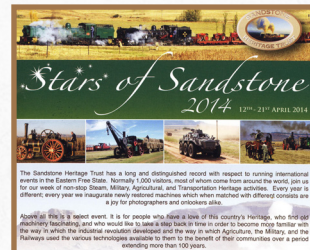
MEDIA COVERAGE

Light Railways Australia, a preminent publication covering Industrial and Light Railways in Australia have published an article describing next years event.

We have already had a number of bookings as a direct result of this coverage.

Many thanks to John Browning and his team. Also to Wendy Black for sending us a scan post haste.

[Click here to read more](#)



AIRCRAFT

Early indications are that more and more Classic and Modern aircraft owners are planning to be at Stars this year.

Our runway is looking good. See all the details below:

Airfield: Sandstone
Operator: Sandstone Estates
PPR: Contact 011 805 4692 or 051 933 2235
(Office hours only)
Latitude: S 28° 50.60'
Longitude: E 028° 00.30'
Length: 800m

Width: 16m
Runway: 01/19
Surface: Grass
Slope: slight uphill on Runway 19
Altitude: 5300'
Frequency: 124.80
Windsock: Adjacent to east side of Runway



CALLING ALL TRAIN CREWS

For those who have not signed up please do so.
For those that have, let us have your travel arrangements.

The White House below has been re painted and will form the basis of single crew accommodation.



HERITAGE MINING

Because the farm Hoekfontein had been in the same family for nearly 170 years it is a living depository of historical items. In the last few days one of our ladies dug up this interesting piece of metal in one of the flower beds, which is obviously very old. Is it a weapon or is it a casting from an implement? Does anyone have any thoughts?



GETTING READY

We have had consistently good rains but not of huge volumes. Certainly enough to keep things ticking over.

We are now in the countdown period to prepare the farm for the influx of special guests in April.

Once again our vintage equipment is hard at work. This Ford 4000 tractor is nearly 40 years old and was purchased new by the current owners of Sandstone.



TRAIN SCHEDULE & EVENTS PROGRAMME

We are pleased to advise that the preliminary first draft of the train schedule and events programme is nearly complete. It will be sent out by this time next week for comment.

It will be a fairly accurate summary of what we are expecting to do so visitors who are only coming for a few days will at least be able to develop a good sense of what to expect on the days that they choose.



HAPPY 2014!

We end this newsletter with good wishes from all of us at Sandstone Estates.

Here's wishing you a banner 2014 where obstacles are treated as challenges and challenges turn out to be positive achievements.

From Wilf, Mike and the team



[Click Here to visit our website](#)