



Stars of Sandstone

2ND-12TH APRIL 2015 NEWSLETTER NO:5

STARS OF SANDSTONE 2015

At Sandstone we believe that we practice pragmatic meliorism, i.e. the belief that the world tends to improve and humans can aid its betterment. This can often be an uphill struggle but we are able to record steady progress on many fronts at Sandstone Estates.

As Stars 2015 draws closer life become more hectic for us but we have much to share with like minded people and hence another newsletter. This will be the last newsletter before Christmas. May we take this opportunity therefore of wishing all our past visitors, future visitors, and members of our mailing list all the very best for the festive season.

The single biggest issue that has been pre-occupying our minds recently is the question of accommodation. We have decided that we will use our 3'6" coaches again as we did last year but there will be a nominal charge because of the cost of purchasing mattresses and upgrading them.

In addition, we have had something of a breakthrough whereby we have acquired

a complete Ox Wagon Camp which has been used for some time in Clarens as a unique adventure tourism and accommodation facility. The complete camp is being loaned to us for Stars 2015 and depending on the success of the project it might remain with us for a longer period of time. A full report on this unique ox wagon camp appears below. They are dry and comfortable, and they will be positioned under some old trees in the garden of the main Sandstone farmhouse within a minute's walk of our main ablution block.

Talking about ablutions, we are pleased to advise that we have given a contract to our master builder to build a brand new Sandstone ablution facility very close to the main Waenhuis complex. The number of people who are likely to be using our main ablution facility is more than usual next year and this brand new facility will be very useful. The drawings for this facility were very kindly provided to us by the National Trust in the UK.

In addition to the ox wagons and the 3'6" coaches, we are pleased to confirm that

we have adequate camping facilities. In this regard we have also concluded an arrangement with a company providing camper van rentals. This might well be an ideal solution for a foreign visitor to collect their camper van in Johannesburg, use it as their mode of transport for the duration of their trip, and of course it provides full accommodation. Full details appear lower down in the body of the newsletter.

Electrical points are available but these are on a first come, first served basis.

To summarise therefore we have actually significantly increased our accommodation capability by building some guest cottages, by providing the new Ox Wagon camp, and by making out 3'6" coaches comfortable in an area that is now tidied up and easily accessible.

Finally, campers, whether they be using their own tents, utilising our big Army tents, or using caravans or camper vans will find themselves very much in the centre of all the activities.

PUBLIC DAY

We have always been concerned that because our event is specialised and exclusive local people do not really have an opportunity to participate. After consultation with the Armour Museum in Bloemfontein it has been agreed that we will have an Open Day to coincide with a Special Armour Parade and various other Military activities. The Armour Museum has a Public Relations mandate and are keen to present the Defence Force in a positive light. We will start publicising our Open Day shortly but for dedicated Stars

followers please note that Saturday, 11th April 2015 will be a very busy day with lots happening and it will be somewhat different in format to what we normally do. The trains will be much more passenger orientated and there will be more of them. It will almost be on demand. We will definitely have two Garratts operating all day around the circuit which will be included in the entry fee.

Family groups will be charged R100 for the first adult, R75 for the second

and all other adults in the group, and R35 for children. Entry tickets will be issued at the gate where the money will be collected. No pre-booking is necessary.

Input from people who know Sandstone well or who have some positive suggestions to make are welcome to communicate with us.

Please contact Dave Richardson
(E: daver@sandstone.co.za).

UNIQUE AVIATION EXPERIENCE

We have come to an arrangement with Springbok Classic Air, operators of South Africa's well renowned and highly respected DC3 (ZS-NTE).

A total of 25 passengers are being invited to come down to Stars 2015 for two days departing early on Tuesday, 7th April 2015 from Rand Airport. They will arrive at the tarmac Ficksburg Municipal airfield approximately an hour and a half after departure. They will then be transported in a vintage bus to the Sandstone Heritage Trust where they will join other guests for the day. Accommodation will be coordinated on site for the two nights they will be there.

The aircraft will then depart on Thursday, 9th April 2015.

The cost of this unique experience is R4,700 all inclusive of the airfare, accommodation, and all meals on site.

Only when we know the configuration of passengers will we be able to confirm the type of accommodation. We have specifically chosen a mid-week flight due to the fact our weekends are crowded and our facilities are much busier. We want to offer a unique visitor experience for the passengers on the DC3 to ride on trains including a special Twilight Express train. They will be given an opportunity to ride in Military convoys as guests of the SA Armour Museum, and of course all the other activities will be open for them to enjoy and participate in.

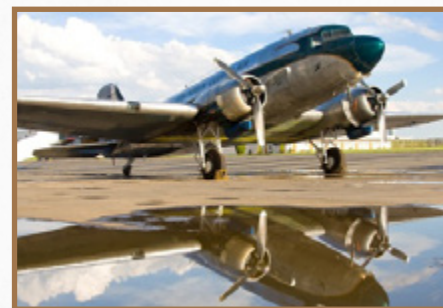
This year we will have good Aviation participation with more vintage aircraft expected than we normally have. The presence of the DC3 will be a unique opportunity to enhance our relationship with classic Aviation enthusiasts.

There is one downside and that is the flight could not be justified if it does not

reach its complement of 25 passengers. We are therefore asking people to express interest now without making a financial commitment to see whether or not we can justify booking the aircraft because once it is booked we have to guarantee to meet the full charter fee.

Should you have any queries please contact Lawrence Clayton on

E: lawrencec@sandstone.co.za.



JB TRAINS TOURS

JB Train Tours have confirmed that they will be operating a service to the Stars 2015 event in the Eastern Free State. We believe this will be a hugely convenient way for people to come down to attend Stars 2015 on an all-inclusive basis while enjoying transport there and back.

Please contact JB Rail Tours direct. We know that you will receive a very warm welcome.



Comfortable & Affordable, Safe & Secure Train Tours

JB Train Tours

(Since 1975)



Getting ready .. the running sheds | Photograph by: Tessa Joughin





Families and especially boys love getting to grips with Military vehicles.



A tranquil evening at the Waenius
Photograph by: Tessa Joughin



Wouter Jubileus working hard in our Running Shed at Hoekfontein on the farm

STARS 2015 PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

If you have not booked yet you can do so on-line at:

For those who have booked and registered and been invoiced we thought we would take a moment to explain our position with regard to payments. When you register we immediately include you in our catering arrangements, train schedules, and various other activities. Our planning is based on the known volume of people that will be with us on a specific day. The deposit we ask you to pay is designed to guarantee that the name on the registration form is going to become in reality a person who will be spending time with us.

Last year we turned people away because we went over the number of people we could accommodate and we ask those who have registered to appreciate that if they cannot come they need to let us know now because it still gives us time to promote the event and allow others to attend.

Once we reach the limit of our catering and related capabilities we will obviously stop promoting the event because it is effectively full.

If you have already received an invoice but have as yet not paid your deposit we would appreciate receiving this as soon as possible.

Thank you for your support with regard to these matters.

THE SANDSTONE 2-FT NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS AS TRAIN MANAGERS

As you probably know all rail operations in South Africa fall under the jurisdiction of the Railway Safety Regulator. At Sandstone we have an exemplary record with this body. It regulates all aspects of safety which includes certification of operating staff, namely train drivers, fireman and train managers which we generally refer to as guards. All of our volunteer staff have to be certified to South African standards. We have achieved this over the last few years with the assistance of Mr. Coen Pretorius who is fully qualified to assess and certify prospective candidates.

All overseas volunteers will need to send through their relevant qualifications and undergo an assessment at the start of the Stars 2015 event to be certified to operate on South African rails. In order to ensure that we maintain the correct staff complement on all our trains we are calling for volunteers for act as Train Managers (Conductors). If you are certified in your home country we need copies of your certification to be sent to us (**E: mikem@sandstone.co.za**). Should you wish to

volunteer as a Train Manager but have no previous certification either in South Africa or overseas, we can offer a one day course at a cost of R350 plus 14% VAT to certify new candidates. This will allow you to act as the Train Manager on the many journeys we shall operate at Stars of Sandstone 2015.

The Train Manager is an integral part of any train operation and has overall control of the train and its movements plus the safety of all passengers. Every train has to have one. If you would like to join us and play an important role in Sandstone's rail operations during the forthcoming event please e-mail Dave Richardson at **daver@sandstone.co.za**. You will certainly get to ride lots of trains!



Barry White from Perth, Australia, who will be joining us as Senior Conductor/Train Manager next year.

CARRIAGE AND WAGON ACTIVITIES

We tend to focus our publicity on the locomotives but we have started to switch our emphasis to rolling stock. Our freight rolling stock refurbishment programme is strong and continues to turn out a good quality product. In fact those that are surplus to our requirements have been exported – these have gone to the UK, to Chile, and to Australia in the past.

Essentially we acquire our freight wagons by bidding on big scrap tenders and in order to win a tender you have to take all the items and therefore we have ended up with many more than we need for practical reasons. Our standard practice is to try and maintain an inventory of ten of each type, and if we exceed that, which is particularly relevant to items like

B-Bogies, we are prepared to make them available to other 2-ft Narrow Gauge Heritage railways. This generates funds which helps us to continue the work that we do.

Dave Richardson has prepared a report on the work being done by our Coach and Wagon Department below.

COACH PRODUCTION AT SANDSTONE BY DAVE RICHARDSON

While locomotives and their restorations often take much of the Kudos at Sandstone, much good is being done by Wouter Jubileus and Ben the Carpenter at Sandstone's home base.

Another two small open coaches based on cocopan frames are nearly complete to join the other four already built. These

small open wagons are ideal for use with our fleet of small industrial locomotives such as the Decauville and "Little Bess".

Also under construction is a sleeper car, certainly a first on South African 2ft gauge! Based on an N6 type coach from Natal rescued in poor condition, it will feature two bedrooms and a shower/toilet area.



The N6 coach before conversion to a sleeping car

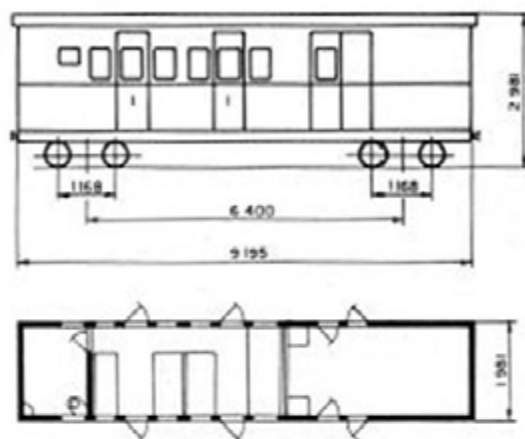
This load of rather beat up cattle trucks arrived during the week. Unfortunately these are almost beyond repair. At best we might use some of the components.



Conversion in progress



The new open coaches take shape.



Remarks :- To seat 9 1st class Europeans
Opmerkinge :- Sitplek vir 9 1ste klas Blankes

Drawing Number	C 1225	Tare (Average)		Vehicle No's	Placed in Service
Tekeningnummer		Torra Gemiddeld	kg	Voertuig	in Gebruik
Bogie Type		Lood			Genoem
Draaisteltype	$2 \frac{1}{2} \times 3 \frac{1}{2}$	Vrag	kg		
Bearing Size		Lood (Coal)		29	1907
Laergraatte		Vrag (Steenkool)	kg		
Springs per Bogie	Outer / Inner	Floor Area	m ²		
Vere per Draaistel	Buite / Binn	Vlooppervlakte	m ²		
Brake System		Capacity	m ³		
Remstelsel	v	Inhoudsvermogen			
Brake Cylinders					
Remsinders					
Brake Percentage	Empty / Loaded	Revision			
Rempersentasie	Leeg / Met Vrag	Hersiening			
Centre of Gravity (Empty)		Date			
Swaartepunt (Leeg)		Datum			

NG. N-6

BLOEMFONTEIN NEWS - AN O&K STORY

After Sandstone's visit to Angola in 2003, a number of ex Sugar Estate locos were acquired (including four of 500mm gauge) and brought to South Africa. Of these four have been restored in Bloemfontein, namely Decauville "Bathala", Arn Jung 0-4-2T no: 847 of 1905, O&K 0-4-0T 10311 of 1922 (originally 500mm gauge and converted to 600mm), and O&K 0-6-0T 12493 of 1934 (also 500mm gauge). This latter locomotive was sold to the Feldbahnmuseum in Nuremberg, Germany where a 500mm gauge line is operated. It was chosen as it was the only locomotive of the 500mm gauge Angolan quartet where conversion to 600mm was not possible due to the axle types. This may now be the only 500mm gauge O&K in existence.



O & K 12493 undertakes a steam test after restoration prior to leaving for Germany.

Of the other 500mm gauge O&K locomotives of 0-6-0T configuration brought to South Africa, no: 11112 of 1925 was earmarked for the next restoration. Originally delivered in September 1925 to the Companhia Do Assucar De Angola for their estate in Caixito, it is of the 30hp type. It is believed to be their No: 5 and was last reported in service in 1969. The last locomotive, no: 12140 of 1930, will shortly be having boiler repairs done as a prelude to full restoration and conversion to 600mm.

As with all of its Angolan sisters, 11112 was in a very poor state and was not initially considered restorable but times change! Just have a look at the picture below to see the horrendous condition the locos were in after lying in the Angolan bush, during the civil war, which suspended most commercial sugar farming.



Three of the Angolan locos as they arrived.



Initial work was begun on the boiler of 11112 at Stevens Mechanical in Howick, Kwa Zulu Natal, which was stripped completely for a total rebuild. For a locomotive thought to be beyond repair, great progress was made. The chassis, of course, was another matter, with many missing parts but nothing is impossible.

In Bloemfontein Lukas Nel and Isak van den Berg, set to restoring the chassis of the 500mm gauge locomotive. The cylinders were removed from the frames for reboring and the loco re gauged to 600mm. New plating was fabricated for the cab and side tanks. Today the locomotive is taking shape and is a far cry from the rusting wreck received from Angola. Work on the loco continues but it is also in the queue behind O & K 12691 due to be launched at Stars of Sandstone in 2015 and NGG11 no: 55.



O & K 11112 well into restoration in Bloemfontein

The big news from the last few weeks is ex SANRASM O&K locomotive, No. 12691, had a successful steam test in Bloemfontein in mid-October. This locomotive will be featured at Stars 2015.



LONG RANGE RESTORATION PROJECT - BAGULEY DREWRY DIESELS

Believe it or not we have four of these in very poor condition from Sena Sugar Estates in Mozambique. We are currently working on a project to restore one or possibly even two to full working order. They were originally fitted with Gardner engines but due to the relative scarcity of Gardners we have also located a pair of very interesting Leyland diesel engines which are from exactly the same era.



We will publish more detailed information once we get our act together with regard to this project.

SANDSTONE ESTATES MAIN OFFICE

The main office at Sandstone Estates is slowly disappearing behind the indigenous trees that we planted in the past. We continue to plant trees and this year we will plant over 5,000. Visitors to Sandstone next year will be interested to notice that a sandstone wall has been built around the office to give it better definition. This will replace the plastic post and rail fence that has been there for some years.



Plastic out, Sandstone in

MILITARY MATTERS

Those that have been to Sandstone before know that we enjoy a wonderfully synergistic and business-like relationship with the Armour Museum in Bloemfontein. General André Retief who took the Salute last year often talks about the guiding principles for all the Officers and men in the Armour Formation.

We have asked him if he wouldn't mind sharing these with us and the link below will be of interest to people who have an interest in Military matters, who understand discipline. To be honest in the corporate sector these guidelines could be invaluable.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ALL ARMOUR LEADERS



Always Accept Responsibility

- Always accept the blame for all problems and mistakes in your team – YOU remain accountable.
- Always set the best example you can for your subordinates in all respects.
- Accept that your subordinates do not serve you, but the SANDF – you all do!
- Accept that your role is to guide and help your subordinates. It is your privilege to lead your team in reaching its objectives.
- Accept that your team and subordinates have the right to competent leadership. Provide it for them!
- Accept that your role is to serve and help your subordinates through control and discipline - their conduct and effective output is your responsibility and a direct reflection of you.
- Accept that respect from your team and subordinates is earned by being the best leader you can be.

Constantly Avoid the following Vital Mistakes

- Avoid making snap decisions before properly consulting and considering the implications.
- Avoid benefiting yourself in any way. Always ensure that your team and subordinates are cared for before you care for yourself. (Example: Eat only when all of them have eaten!)
- Avoid not being on time – in any circumstances. Be on time, meet deadlines and target dates and always be present where you are expected to be.
- Avoid cheating and lying and avoid people who do. You will never regain lost credibility.
- Avoid not listening – your subordinates need you to listen and hear them.
- Avoid being the "boss" – your role is to serve the organisation and your people.
- Avoid wasting your time or the time of others.

Always Strive to Do the following

- Always place your team first – but do not neglect your family.
- Give a lot of recognition and credit. Always be grateful for effort and say: "Thank you!"
- Always be polite – other people appreciate and reciprocate good treatment.
- Remember to listen. Make time for your subordinates – but be wise in time management.
- Strive to constantly improve yourself academically, socially and physically. Create a learning culture.
- Challenge your subordinates to improve themselves likewise – and create those opportunities.
- Improve the conditions and circumstances in your unit for everyone's benefit.
- Improve and maintain your unit's facilities. Build – don't break down or neglect.
- Lead from the front. Be visible and "on the ground".
- Attend all critical events and issues. Daily routine is often also critical – you and your subordinates must always be on time, present and committed to give your very best.
- "Get up, dress up and show up!"
- Integrate the role of Commander, Leader and Manager through dedication to **LCAMPS** Principles.
- Always admit your mistakes and make apologies if required.
- Be kind and caring to your team – but very firm on standards and discipline!

Always Strive for Excellence. Help your team to be the best in everything

- Strive for the highest Combat Readiness and Mission Readiness.
- Strive for the best results in training, fitness, shooting, sport and service delivery.
- Strive to win all competitions.
- Strive to always be the most professional in the appearance of your subordinates and unit facilities.
- Strive towards Zero tolerance for mediocre appearance and performance! Accept only the very best!



Make the Flame of the Armour - Burn forever!



(ANDRÉ RETIEF)
GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING: BRIG GEN

10 September 2014



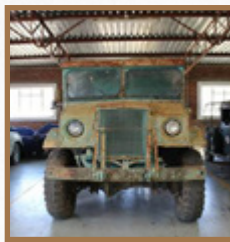
MILITARY MATTERS - CONTINUED

A new arrival in the Military vehicle collection is a Canadian Ford V8 converted to a 4-wheel drive by the Marmon Harrington Company. Details are as follows:

Chassis No. J154-6-2C-17873E
- Chassis Weight 7500 Lbs.

Motor No. 17873F
- Total gross weight 22000 Lbs.

This venerable old Second World War truck is currently receiving some serious TLC. We have ordered parts from Canada which are fortunately still readily available. It will be part of our Military programme for Stars 2015.



Classic British Military humour

Our Mk IV Sherman tank dating back to the Second World War is quite famous. It has been rented by film companies and we have many visitors who ask specifically if they can arrange to be driven in the tank. It has an interesting reputation and is often referred to as America's best worst tank. The Mk IV was far from perfect but it didn't matter.

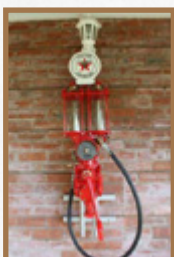
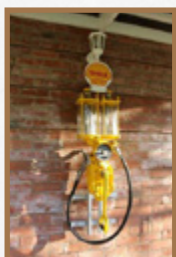
We have just received the following interesting Military Restoration news from Australia which will be of interest to Military enthusiasts:



OLD PETROL PUMPS

Earlier this year we found two petrol pumps in our Stores which were looking very much the worse for wear. We honestly do not know where we got them from but needless to say we approached Neville Botha, who is a master craftsman when it comes to restoring items like this. Neville rang recently to say they were ready and when we collected them he refused point blank to accept any compensation for his efforts. This is often the case with men who are retired and who have dedicated themselves to their hobby. Neville has a magnificent collection of old Stationary engines, vehicles, and many other items too numerous to mention.

If you would like to have a chat to him you can call him on
Tel: 082 388 2604.



Beauty and a beast... Olifant in the Cosmos | Photograph by Errol Ashwell

NGG11 No. 54

Archive picture of NGG11, No. 54, taken at Humewood in April 1991 after overhaul. The loco was only steamed a few times as it was not powerful enough to haul Apple Express revenue earning trains. It is currently dry stored at Sandstone but suffered severe corrosion damage standing in the saline air for so many years after the overhaul.

The Apple Express is currently not operating but negotiations are on-going. For further details contact Nerina Skuy on **Skuy@worldonline.co.za.**



OUR INFRASTRUCTURE - WOOD NEVER SLEEPS...!!

Ben, our carpenter, has been hard at work. The Eastern Free State climate is not kind to wood and both our shop and our Elephant wagon have received attention and are looking much brighter.



Here's a photo of indefatigable Ben with one of the new signs he has made for Stars 2015

MIXING DAY-TO-DAY FARMING ACTIVITIES WITH PRESERVATION

Our Afrikaner oxen which are so well known do not just represent the pretty face of Sandstone. They actually work. For example, a regular clean-up run is done throughout the complex every week. Our picture shows a pair of our young oxen going about their business in a quiet and steady manner.



FARM ACTIVITIES

The crop planting is now completed and the results are looking satisfactory. Our Arable Manager, Des Clarke, has submitted this brief report.

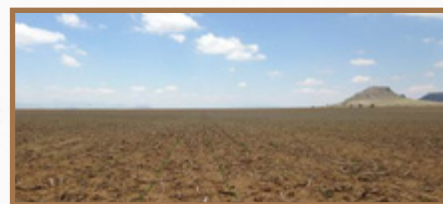
The first lands we planted were at Lagerplaats and they showed good Soya Bean germination as per the photo below.



Our rotation also permits us to plant Maize on Maize. The Maize residue from the previous year is clearly visible in this photo taken at Sekonyela.

This photo gives a good idea of what it is like to plant to the horizon.

Maize germination was also good. The advantage of a Maize/Soya rotation is that it is possible to keep the lands extremely clean due to the strong weed control programme that would have been carried out on the Soya Bean lands the previous year.



Larissa Clarke, wife of Des, submitted these pictures to us. Because these machines work 24-hours a day she took him supper one evening and took these photographs during his break. As you can see from the photo below Des and his three boys were all enjoying a few minutes respite from the relentless planting. This is the way computerised, highly mechanised farming is going. Modern farm tours are being coordinated for Stars 2015.



Typically one does not plant crops in the Eastern Free State after the end of November and we have met the deadline.

STARS 2015 BIRDING EXCURSIONS

Every year we have a number of people who specifically ask if they can take time out to look at the birds. Keith Wetmore has supplied us with a list of birds which have been observed by bird watchers in the past at Sandstone.

We will be hosting bird watching tours which will be by appointment. If you are interested in birds and you would like

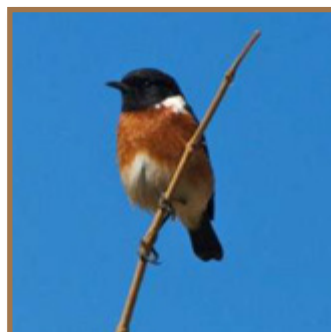
to spend some time looking at our wonderful wetlands and other parts of the farm please contact Keith Wetmore on E: keith@somtim.co.za.

Some additional pictures are required so if you are familiar with any of these birds and you have a picture can you please forward it to Keith.

Sandstone Estates - Bird List



844 Blue Waxbill



596 African Stonechat



71 Cattle Egret



63 Black-headed Heron

The Crankhandle Chronicle

DECEMBER 2014



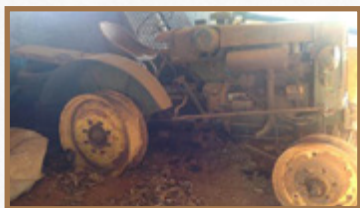
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Cape Town, South Africa



TRACTORS AVAILABLE

We have been approached by a lady in Haenertsburg in Limpopo Province regarding two 1950 MAN tractors that are available for restoration. Pictures appear below.



If you are interested in these tractors please contact Frances McComb at baliwillwill@gmail.com.

CAMPER VAN HIRE

- (SEE EDITORIAL RIGHT)

We have come up with a very useful idea which not only resolves the problem of getting to Sandstone but also sorts out where you sleep when you get there. We have had very good discussions with Bobo Campers and negotiated good rates for visitors to Stars 2015.

We strongly suggest that our visitors, both local and particularly overseas, consider this option on a self-drive basis. It means you will be totally self-contained, you will be comfortable, and you will be close to the action. We charge a nominal fee for use of the campground which includes access to electricity (particularly if you book early) and use of our ablution block.

To book a camper please deal directly with Bobo Campers
(E: info@bobocampers.com /
W: www.bobocampers.com).

Also, some visitors might be interested in top class accommodation a bit further away. If so please take a look at Lavender Hill Country Estate in Bethlehem.

ACCOMMODATION NEWS - NEW OX WAGON CAMP

We have available 8 Ox wagons - 6 of them can fit 8 (4 double-decker bunk beds), 1 with double bed and 1 family wagon (1 double bed, 2 single) total of 54 beds available at R450.00 per ox wagon (R57.00 per person)

Fitted with foam mattress, please bring your own bedding.

These wagons are situated between trees for shade, and within a short walking distance to the ablution blocks, station and dining area.

Lights will be available in the wagons.

The ox wagons will be perfect for groups wanting to camp, but have no tent. This is easy, comfortable, and affordable accommodation.

People who snore loudly will be moved by the Oxen to a remote location on the farm!



Steps available for top bed



4 double-decker bunk beds



Double bed



Standard Ox Wagon



Family wagon, 1 double bed, 2 single beds



REQUEST FOR IDEAS – LIGHTING

The new coach that we are rebuilding requires lighting, obviously of a period nature. This coach dates back to the early 1900's and if anyone has any knowledge of where we can source suitable lights we would appreciate hearing from them. We do not even know what the lights look like but they were obviously down lights, probably in brass.



If you have any ideas or archive data on what we should be looking at please send to it Dave Richardson
(E: daver@sandstone.co.za).

STAYING ON TRACK - THE ARTERY OF THE RAILWAY

As we prepare for Stars of Sandstone 2015 our attention will turn to our many kilometres of track. With a route mileage of nearly 27 kilometres this is not a simple task. Our railway has many varied sections with quite severe gradients and curves and changes of altitude. With summer weather conditions and the onset of rain, which is critical to maintain our farm activities, this very life blood can wreak havoc on our 2ft line. The risk of washaways and landslips is very possible and although our line is not used every day periodic inspections are carried out to identify problem areas before they become safety critical.

These inspections identify not only actual or potential track movements, but also breakages that can occur with rails or points and are part of our Safety Management System with the Railway Safety Regulator. Another critical area is also the number of crossings we have on the line where visitors and farm machinery of all shapes, sizes and weight cross the track. This adds an extra element of track maintenance to keep them clean, as derailments can easily occur on a crossing where the rails have taken a covering of mud or stone or both.

At present our system of managing water runoff, via positioning of hay bales and

culverts, has worked well for us but some passage of water also takes place under the ballast which can result in varying the track level across both rails or just on one side. In railway terms, a "slack". On our inspections (usually by trolley) these are identified quickly and the ballast repacked under the sleepers to level the track. Where there is severe water run off we may adjust our diversion systems to alleviate future problems. Much of the work is carried out by our own staff but once a year a rail contractor is called in and a very comprehensive inspection is done and the line repaired as required.

So you might think that the Sandstone railway is all about locos and wagons but those two pieces of parallel steel keep the whole show together and need as much love and attention as any loco or piece of rolling stock.



The permanent way is a critical part of our rail operations. Picture courtesy of Dennis Moore.

MAIN LINE HERITAGE NEWS - OUTENIQUA CHOO-TJOE

We received a newsflash saying that the decision had been taken to rebuild the line and reintroduce traffic. However, we then subsequently received the following statement from the Friends of the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe which said this was not the case:

"Following a meeting with Classic Rail, I can report that press announcements in the local newspapers and on Facebook are premature.

There is a process which is being followed by TFR and discussions are still ongoing.

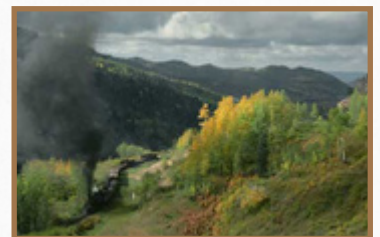
We are however confident that we will receive positive news soon, but will wait for a directive from TFR."



Photo taken at Kaaimans River in 1987
Photograph by: Dave Richardson

OVERSEAS PRESERVATION NEWS

We would like to draw rail enthusiasts attention to the magnificent Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad which recently hosted a small Sandstone delegation.



SOUTKOP ON SEKONYELA

A mighty mountain dwarfs a tiny tractor at Soutkop on Sekonyela. Sekonyela is one of our classic landmarks on the farm. It has a rich historical past.



A different view of Soutkop with Sandstone's 18-row planter planting Maize below it.

A PECKETT'S TALE

Peter Kennan, from the UK, a visitor to Stars of Sandstone in 2014, has sent us a photo of his Peckett 0-6-0T locomotive, a standard gauge example and sister to our Sena no: 14, 2ft gauge example. Peter's example is works no: 2000 of 1942 with our no: 14 being works no: 2161 of 1957, the penultimate steam locomotive built by Peckett.

No: 2000 originally worked at the British Sugar Corporation in Ipswich before preservation at the now closed North Woolwich Museum in London. It is now at Barrow Hill preservation centre.

Peter also has access to Peckett's original paint supplier and colour details should our loco need a repaint!



Peter Kennan's 0-6-0ST at Barrow Hill in the UK.

Locomotive builders, Peckett & Sons, Atlas Works, Bristol, were formed in 1880 when Thomas Peckett took over the established firm of Fox Walker & Co. and became Peckett & Sons at a later date. The bulk of Peckett's production were industrial tank locomotives of different gauges using a large number of standardised parts. The post war years were difficult for Peckett, in 1947 for instance, only five locomotives left the works. Things picked up briefly in the 1950s and they built a number of locomotives, including seven 2ft gauge examples for Sena Sugar Estates of which Sandstone has two, numbers 11 and 14. They were too late entering the diesel market, their first such offering emerging in 1956, but only four of this type of locomotive were built. Approximately 1900 locomotives were built by Fox Walker/Peckett but as there were many gaps in the surviving works list the true figure may never be known.

The final two locomotives, 2161 of 1957 (Sena no: 14, see below) and 2165 of 1958 (a 3ft gauge 0-6-0T) (there were no numbers 2162-2164) were both for Sena Sugar, and both are now in Sandstone's collection.



Sena No: 14 just after restoration in 2008, photographed by Geoff Cooke. He last photographed her at Sena in 1975 (see picture right)



GALLERY



One of our special events - The great Edwardian Experience | April 2007 | Photography by Tessa Joughin



A small train in a big winter landscape... freight and passengers at Sandstone Estates



Kommandoberg | Photography by Tessa Joughin

MEDIA

Tilly Smith Dix, our PR consultant, has been really active again this year and highly successful as well. Below are a number of links providing advance

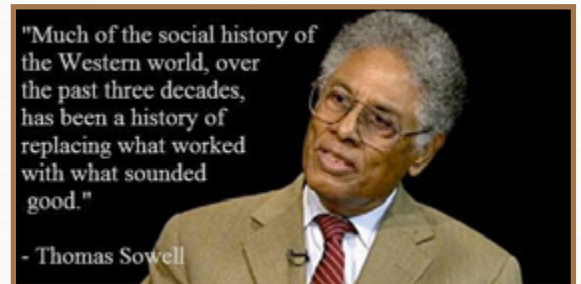
publicity for the Stars of Sandstone 2015. Where Tilly is particularly successful is to reach publications that cover markets of people that we would not normally

communicate with. Bookings have been strong and we are optimistic that we will have a great event.

POLITICS

In short we do not do politics but we do pragmatics. However, Thomas Sowell, who is an American economist, social theorist, political philosopher, and author, and currently a Senior Fellow on Public Policy at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, USA, is well known for his highly relevant and accurate summaries of the political and economic world that he reviews. We enjoyed this one because it resonates with us from a Heritage standpoint.

So much of the machinery we have got does a fantastic job 50-years after it was built at a much lower cost because it is simpler and in many cases more robust. The fact that it does not have computers on board makes it much easier for the farm to maintain. I am sure that is not necessarily what he meant but old and outdated is not necessarily bad.



We are quite sure he wasn't talking about machinery but we still like what he said.

FROM ALL AT SANDSTONE ESTATES WE WISH YOU A MERRY
CHRISTMAS & A WONDERFUL 2015! SEE YOU SOON

