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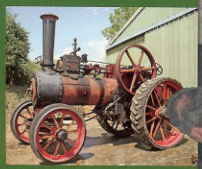
STEAM & VINTAGE PRESERVATION

July 2011

No 257

FIRST TIME IN PRESERVATION ERA

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## Jam & Jelly

THE LEYLAND 'CHIVERS VAN'



Please rescue me! The Aveling compound roller in its original location.



Sandstone's crane and forklift are employed to raise the dead Aveling roller over the railway lines.

# Sandstone saves more South African steam

**SEPTEMBER 2010 saw South Africa hit by an unprecedented steam preservation crisis of massive proportions, when Steam in Action – a local interest group with worldwide membership – discovered that locomotives belonging to the South Africa National Railway and Steam Museum (SANRASM) had been attacked by ruthless scrap thieves and local residents, reports *Geoff Pethick*.**

**Beside all the brass, copper and anything removable being stolen, the professional thieves had cut out and removed all the driving wheel axleboxes, although it must be said that these locomotives had been left unfenced and unguarded just a few hundred yards from an informal settlement.**

**Shortly afterwards most of the SANRASM Exco resigned and following an Extraordinary General Meeting of members a new committee was formed with a mandate to sort out the mess and reduce the collection, numbering nearly 100 steam locomotives, numerous coaches and a mass of other artefacts, to manageable proportions.**

**Sandstone Heritage Trust offered assistance immediately in providing a home for the narrow gauge equipment and steam road rollers as it was feared that items at the two fenced sites would suffer in the same way. The first item to be salvaged was Garratt NGG 11, which was standing dumped in the main access road to the site, where it had lain for over 20 years. Built in 1919 by Beyer-Peacock, it is the second oldest Garratt in the world, behind K1 of the Welsh Highland Railway. Originally used by the SAR, it was then sold to Rustenburg Platinum Mine and used on their extensive 2ft gauge system. After that system was replaced by Cape gauge track, it went to a museum in Johannesburg where it stood outside the entrance. When a road widening scheme meant it had to be moved it was donated to SANRASM. Fortunately, it had escaped the attention of thieves and was dismantled and loaded onto Sandstone's low loaders with the aid of a large hired crane. It was taken to Sandstone's repair facility in Bloemfontein where it was dismantled and assessed for work required to restore it to working order. It was found to be in poor condition and there is a lot of work required but Lukas Nel, Sandstone's steam magician, hopes to have it finished during 2012.**

**As part of the same operation Sandstone also rescued an O&K tank locomotive, a dismantled narrow gauge Avonside loco, a narrow gauge mining diesel, a NGG 13 Garratt, a lattice girder footbridge as a kit of parts, a large cylindrical water tank and sundry other bits and pieces.**



Nearly there.



NGG 11 is loaded onto Sandstone's low-bed rig.



NGG 11 tenders get ready to leave.



Preparations are made to ready the O&K locomotive for lifting.



Ready to roll.

Once NGG 11 was out of the way thoughts turned to other items. It was evident that SANRASM's new home would be considerably smaller than previous and there would be little room for non rail-related items. So Sandstone again stepped in to offer assistance and offered to provide a home for five steam rollers, two which had been cosmetically restored; a large Fowler and an Aveling & Porter compound example, the latter donated by a mining company in Johannesburg. These proved to be no match for Sandstone's heavy duty forklift and mobile crane which had been brought up from the Free State, although the railway tracks, uneven ground and thick mud did their best to stop things.

Also taken to safety were three steam rollers in poor condition which once worked in the Kimberley area. These had never been touched since arriving many years before and the wooden canopies and chimneys just fell to pieces as soon as lifting started.

It has not been possible to ascertain further details of these rollers at this stage, as they are not featuring on any asset register so far located.

So total disaster was averted, thanks to Steam in Action and particularly Sandstone Heritage Trust. This gave breathing space for the new committee to take things forward. SANRASM has now got back on its feet and, with cosmetic restoration of the remaining items started, negotiations continue regarding a new home with Reefsteamers in Germiston, east of Johannesburg.

# SANDSTONE FIELDS FOUR GARRATTS AT APRIL GALA

ON THE afternoon of 10 April 2011, four 2ft gauge Garratt locomotives representing the products of four separate manufacturers were steamed together hauling a 35-wagon train on the private 2ft gauge railway at Sandstone Estates, Eastern Free State.

Among the Sandstone Heritage Trust Collection are four Garratt locomotives manufactured by Cockerill (Belgium); Beyer Peacock (UK); Hanomag (Germany) and Hunslet (South Africa).

The four locomotives have been painstakingly restored to full working order over 20 years and it was decided to co-ordinate this historic locomotive steaming to coincide with the April international steam gala held at Sandstone.

There is nowhere in the world where four operating Garratts sit in the same running shed and therefore it seemed appropriate that it should come together for the benefit of enthusiasts who had flown from many parts of the world to witness the spectacle.

Sandstone Trust spokesman Wilfred Mole said, "South Africa has always been a proven and popular destination for dedicated enthusiasts. South Africa's legacy as a steam railway destination is highly respected around the world but in recent years there has been a rapid decline in the number of heritage railways that still operate steam and which offer a tourist experience. Although located in a remote area of South Africa, Sandstone's engineering excellence is recognised worldwide and was proven by the spectacle of over 300 tons of locomotive power working together in perfect harmony."



Four narrow gauge Garratts from four manufacturers take to the Sandstone line on April 10. DAVID BENN