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Your comments, queries and suggestions are always welcome!

Please email:
joannewest@btinternet.com

Steam in Action - An Association
Incorporated under Section 21
Registration Number 2007/035119/08
www.steam-in-action.com

Introduction

Thank you for supporting Steam in Action, a group dedicated to reversing the inexorable decline of South Africa's steam railway capability over the last 15-years. Much has been lost but enough has been saved to help us recreate experiences that a declining number of people took for granted in years gone by.

We have not had the opportunity to answer each and every one of your e-mails but we are hoping to appoint a full-time Director of SIA from early next year onwards which means that we will be in constant contact with everyone who has something to contribute or who has ideas and recommendations that we can implement. We hope that by reading this action report you will be able to develop a feel for how much has been achieved in a very short time.

Inevitably any new initiative like this is bound to bruise a few egos and cause a certain amount of ruffling of feathers amongst "the establishment". Our message to them is simple - we are interested in getting things done, not debating who is right and who is wrong. The fact is that many of the government policies, provincial initiatives, municipal involvements etc. were flawed and while they may have been well meaning inevitably caused more harm than good. We should never forget the sort of power that is dangled in front of owners of locomotives by scrap dealers who peddle the inviting prospect of instant cash. Steam in Action is totally disinterested in any discussion with any party who plans to melt down our South African Rail Heritage. We will through everyone's support try to out bid the scrap dealers where we can and we have no doubt that as SIA matures that it will develop a formidable capability to intervene as required.

It is our constituency of members which now stands at over 500 which is going to make the difference. If you have a copy of our manifesto and if you know of someone who might be interested in supporting this initiative, even if it is only from a moral standpoint, then please ask them to join. Thanks once again for your support.

Shaun Ackerman / Mike Myers



Photograph
courtesy
of Dick Manton

Rogers Tour 2007
in the Eastern
Free State
(Slabberts)

News from Heritage Bodies

Steam in Action is in contact with the SAHRA (South African Heritage Resources Agency).

Steam in Action has made contact with Transnet at the highest level and we have been assured of a full investigation and a proper response. This relates to the almost unforgivable things that have happened over the last two years regarding the demise of rail heritage and the lack of response from the Transnet Heritage Foundation.

Steam in Action and Transnet Heritage Foundation. Here is a recent letter sent to Mrs Eunice Maluleke of the Transnet Heritage Foundation:

“Dear Mrs. Maluleke,

You are undoubtedly aware of the success of Steam in Action, particularly around the world. We would be very pleased if the Transnet Heritage Foundation could comment on the initiatives that are being implemented.

The most commonly asked question from around the world is, "What is your relationship with the Transnet Heritage Foundation?" From our standpoint the comment is "Excellent" but from THF's standpoint the comment is "We do not know".

We look forward to hearing from you.

We believe that by including Steam in Action in the national preservation picture your objectives will be significantly enhanced.

Regards,

Michael C. Myers“

Archive Matters

A challenge of almost insurmountable proportions is to collect, record, understand and save for posterity the massive amount of archive data that South Africa had at its disposal. Much of the best information is already lost but Steam in Action has created a special archive facility managed by a professional Librarian to try and collect, record and then recycle copies of the information back to interested parties. To obtain just a small hint of the quality of what we have at our disposal have a look at this meaningful picture. Eric Conradie, one of South Africa's most knowledgeable Archivists, records that it is Grahamstown Station taken in 1896. The picture was taken by the official Cape Government Railway photographer, E.H. Short. What is interesting about this picture is it shows that the rainbow nation was alive if not well in 1896.



International Archive Material Available from Scotland. We are very grateful to the many people and organizations that have our best interest at heart. Recently we made contact with the Glasgow University Archive Services for archived material ... William Bill writes “... I can confirm that we have drawings ... A list of them can be found ...”

[To read this article, click here](#)



A few examples of archived photographs in our collection

Media Relations

The following press release has been issued:

“South Africa Launches Railway Heritage Tourism Initiative

Three major players in the Rail Tourism and Rail Heritage sector in Southern Africa have joined forces to promote, uplift and develop the potential for Rail Tourism in Southern Africa. Entitled “Steam in Action”, the three groups, namely Reefsteamers, a major long distance steam rail operator based in Germiston, Friends of the Rail, a similar organisation based in Pretoria, and the Sandstone Heritage Trust, which operates a Narrow Gauge railway of global significance, have joined forces to develop this initiative.

A spokesman for Reefsteamers, Shaun Ackerman, stated, “South Africa is widely recognised as having one of the most interesting and diverse railway networks in the world. The country has long been regarded as a Mecca for railway enthusiasts, particularly for photographers and those who wish to enjoy steam hauled heritage locomotives operating in their natural environment. From the tiniest Narrow Gauge Sugar Cane locomotives to the mighty GMAM Garratts, South Africa has it all.”

For a number of years now steam operations in South Africa have been in decline. Lack of funding and manpower, as well as restrictions placed by the national authority, has caused shrinkage in the movement. Information has now been released to the effect that THF, the division within Transnet which owns the vast majority of the country's remaining steam locomotives and runs the world famous “Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe”, will be phased out and possibly put up for sale. A strong desire exists within and outside South Africa to save our Railway Heritage and use it as a tool to attract foreign and local tourists. Consequently the “Steam in Action” initiative has been launched. This aims to stabilise and reinvigorate heritage rail activities in South Africa by means of garnering financial and moral support from people worldwide.

Spurred on by the desire to ensure that line closures and the scrapping of locomotives was curtailed, “Steam in Action” seeks to point out to the various role players within the railway sector in South Africa that its railway network is a highly regarded national treasure which needs to be developed and not diminished.



A manifesto has been released today with worldwide distribution. Mike Myers of the Sandstone Heritage Trust commented, “We can only achieve our long-term objectives with international support and cooperation. It is the international railway tourist who is most likely to appreciate the magic of a Steam Railway experience in Southern Africa. We are encouraging them to visit South Africa and to work with us to ensure that what we offer is up to international standards in all respects. Furthermore Railway Heritage is well developed in many countries, particularly in Europe, the United States and Australia, and we seek collaboration with different role players within these organisations to ensure that we learn from them and lift our standards to international levels.”

For further details contact joanneewest@btinternet.com”

Steam in Action means Working Together



Reefsteamers. Within hours of each other, reports came in from Reefsteamers clearly indicating both the quality and the dynamic behind their engineering support programme at their depot in Germiston.



The first scoop of coal, which is dusty grey from long storage.
This photo was taken from standing on top of the 12AR Cab.

To read about the
Big Coal Caper
(and other stories),
click here

or visit
www.reefsteamers.co.za
for further articles



The Steam in Action locomotive transfer train
on route from Ficksburg to Germiston.
To read about the Ficksburg Locomotive
Transfer Run, click here



Sandstone Heritage Trust. Just as enthusiastic and equally interesting is Gert Jubileus' report from the Eastern Free State on Branchline and Narrow Gauge activities in the Eastern Free State. Gert Jubileus is the Running Shed Foreman at the Hoekfontein Workshops where the Narrow Gauge locomotives operate from on the private Sandstone Estates Railway. Gert and his team have done a magnificent job in recent days in preparing the big Main Line locos, namely our 15F, 25NC, and DE2 English Electric Rhodesian Railways locomotive for transport to Reefsteamers as part of the new SIA cooperation agreement.

The Giants are Back!

The Giants roaring out of Kommandonek Station early on Saturday morning, beating their harts out on the Main lines on the way to Johannesburg and into a new unstoppable future!



To read this article, [click here](#)

or visit

www.sandstone-estates.com
for further articles



Friends of the Rail. Like Reefsteamers and the Sandstone Heritage Trust this is all about real steam action.

21st Birthdays only happen once. There are not too many railway societies around which can boast of this age. Thus, 2007 was a year deemed appropriate for Friends of the Rail to celebrate its long and successful lifespan ...

To read this article, [click here](#)

To read about the 2007 Witbank Marathon, and other news stories [click here](#)



Joanna, the Birthday Girl!

or visit

www.friendsoftherail.com
for further articles

Steam in Action and HRASA. Not everyone agrees with Steam in Action ... it's called democracy ... a word that means many things to many people.

Different organisations really. Steam in Action are operators - they own locomotives and they employ staff to maintain, drive and fire them. They are hungry for business and are keen to expand their product and services footprint. They are designed to run along industry lines. In so doing they have to protect their interests and this forces them to interact with the authorities in order that their depots, locos and access agreements are all in place in accordance with good corporate governance. HRASA is an industry representative body which means that it is insulated from the day-to-day operational side of loco movements. Although there is the inevitable difference of opinion between SIA and HRASA this need not be ...

To read this article, [click here](#)

Steam in Action establishes Driver and Firemen Academy



SIA has a number of Transnet Freight Rail accredited and Rail Safety Regulator approved steam drivers and firemen who are used by Reefsteamers, Friends of the Rail, The Sandstone Heritage Trust and some of the other operators around the country to drive and fire our steam locomotives. SIA feels however that we will inevitably lose the skills that some of our most experienced drivers and firemen have gained due to their age and the time we have to train new candidates professionally to be sure that they are only of the best for the future running of steam is limited! We appeal to everyone that is keen and interested in this initiative to think of approaching us so we can see how we can assist you to reach you childhood dream through the correct channels. We are also asking any retired or ex steam drivers and firemen (taking into account your age) that would like to recertify through TFR to operate steam again to contact us.

The objective will be to establish a register of qualified, certified drivers who can be made available to any steam operator in South Africa.

For more information, please contact Elize Lubbe on elize@reefsteamers.co.za
or Shaun Ackerman on fairlie@vodamail.co.za



Important Letter

A few words from one of the world's most popular and dedicated steam preservationists, David Shepherd.



David Shepherd
O.B.E., F.R.S.A., F.R.G.S.

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29th October 2007

Our Ref:DS/ja2176

Steam in Action

Dear Shaun and Mike,

Steam in Action

I was delighted when the Sandstone Heritage Trust suggested that I write a few words in the first newsletter, particularly as, at the time of writing, my locomotive, 'Avril', is about to pass in steam for Germiston into the care of my friends in Reefsteamers.

It is now many years ago that 3052 was donated by South African Railways to my good self and ever since then, I have dreamed of the time when the locomotive could haul trains wherever possible on Spoornet, filled with enthusiasts who had come to your country to enjoy the delights of steam as well as supporting wildlife conservation by going on safari. Now it seems that dreams may well come true. For me personally, it will be a thrill to raise funds for the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation through the use of such a magnificent locomotive not to mention the wonderful thought that 'Avril' is returning to Germiston. It was in 1971 that BBC Television filmed my life story, 'The Man Who Loves Giants' and, it was when filming in Germiston steam sheds that I first set eyes on 3052; I would never have believed in those days that I would come to own a 15F which could help to save wildlife.

I must now say that none of this would be at all possible without the marvellous support from the fine team at the Sandstone Heritage Trust and all my friends at Reefsteamers. I only wish that distance did not prevent me enjoying the delights of 3052 more often but I fully intend to support 'Steam in Action' in any way I can.

Yours sincerely

David Shepherd O.B.E.

Steam Cranes Cut Up

This is going to be the sad part of our newsletter and we apologise for the distress that these images will cause many people.

The tender put out by Spoornet recently for the scraping of steam cranes was put on hold pending a review by the South African Heritage Resource Agency.

Sandstone was alerted to the fact that the cranes at Kimberley were being cut up, despite this "not being possible" because the tender had not yet been awarded and the closing option date had been extended due to the preservation request.

Steam2000 reports that like other preservation organisations interested in acquiring one of the cranes for preservation, that it had received the request from Spoornet to hold their offer open for another month.

Andrew Schanknecht from Steam2000 sent in a report and had the following to say "This indicated to me that at least attention was being given to the short term preservation order. But by then it was too late for Beaconsfield; I had been tipped off that notwithstanding the above, something was amiss and made the trip to Beaconsfield on Friday 19 October only to find one crane cut and the other at least half way cut. I advised HRASA and Spoornet; the latter ordering cutting to cease. The contractor has subsequently left site; presumably to Warrenton to cut locomotives there which were awarded to them. I have taken the local reps of SAHRA to see the remains of the cranes - which distressed them."

It is understood that an investigation as to who had given authority in this regard and who had cut up the cranes is being carried out.

Whatever the outcome these valuable heritage items have been lost forever.



A sad and unnecessary end ...

Narrow Gauge News

International News. It is ironic that our 3'6" railway network in Southern Africa is considered by many to be Narrow Gauge. When we in South Africa talk about Narrow Gauge we mean 600cms or 2-ft. The two primary players at the moment are the Sandstone Heritage Trust on its private railway in the Eastern Free State and the Apple Express operating out of Port Elizabeth. The Sandstone Heritage Trust has extended the hand of cooperation to the Apple Express in the past with a view to providing them with steam traction power. We recognise what an amazingly iconic line the 300-kms Port Elizabeth to Avontuur Line really is. Crossing the Van Stadens River bridge is strictly in the goose bump department as far as an experience is concerned. We will report back on how these discussions are going.

In the meantime we continue to be impressed by the dedication shown by so many people from around the world who have travelled on South Africa's wonderful Narrow Gauge lines in the past.

Invitation received:

"Dear Mike,

I got a request about your Decauville "Bathala" .

The Frankfort light railway museum owns a 0-4-0 Decauville built in 1912, 5 tons weight and 20hp of traction.

The Frankfort light railway museum asked me if it would be possible to visit the museum for a possible event "10hp Decauville meets 20hp Decauville"

*See the attached pdf data sheet and the link to the museum home page: <http://www.feldbahn-ffm.de/index.htm>
This railway is one of the most important collectors and restorer of light railway equipment in Germany and also in Europe.*

*Regards,
Philipp Maurer"*

To read the datasheet, click here

Why we know we are on the right track.

The modern world relies heavily on the power of the media to support any proposition. We had barely started when the first of the e-mails started coming in. Here is a request from Sebastian Laemmle from Germany:

"I am producing "off the beaten path" travel reports and short films for German TV broadcasts, so I am always seeking interesting stories and people.

After exploring your website, your Locos and all the other historic vehicles are looking very appealing to me. I am very interested in producing a film about your steam association.

*If you are interested in a co-operation, I am glad if you would reply!
I am looking forward to hearing from you soon!*

*Best regards
Sebastian Laemmle"*

Local News. Sandstone Cherry Festival Trains Run Full



The annual Cherry Festival unique to Ficksburg, was held this week on the 15th to the 17th November. We were fortunate to run three Cherry trains on each day. Class NGG 16 number 113 was the chosen locomotive and hauled a train that was capable of 150 passengers at a time. Our trains run over the entire Sandstone Steam Railway giving passengers an experience of a lifetime.

The Cherry Trains.

We fired up number 113 at 04H00 on Thursday morning and she was in full steam at 08H30, just in time to perform shunting work needed in Hoekfontein Station.



Number 113 on her way out from the shed to Hoekfontein Station



Our fireman for the day, Henry Brown



We started to clean the locomotive just after we washed her out. Henry polished all the brass on the locomotive for her to shine like a cherry.

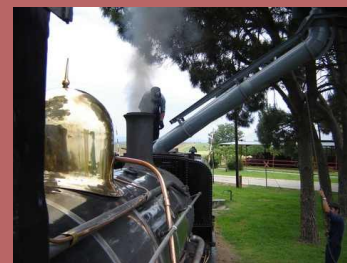




(Left) Driver Pat Ackerman, thundering out of Grootdraai with the Cherry Express

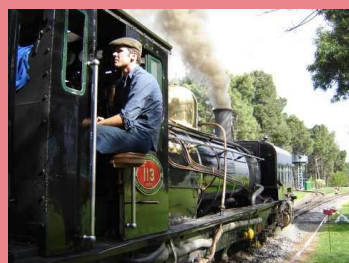
(Right) An African view through the Guards van window

(Far Right) Number 113, replenishing her thirst at Hoekfontein water column

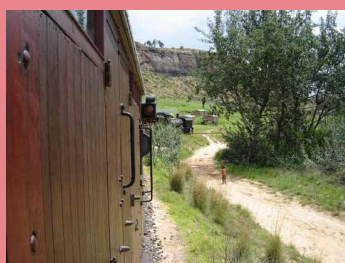


The Cherry Express trains departed from Hoekfontein Station and headed to Grootdraai on the Lesotho border before returning to Hoekfontein. Baas de Bruin, our Station Master, signaled the driver to run through Hoekfontein if there were no new latecomer passengers. The train then headed to Pandora Junction where the points were set to run around the big balloon clockwise. This is the most scenic part of the line with sharp curves and stunning gradients. Soon 113 slowed down to a crawling pace, allowing her train to slowly follow every curve through the peach trees on the way to Vailima Halt. Giant Sandstone rocks can be seen as the tracks run adjacent the Vailima Mountains. From Vailima Halt the train runs downhill, all the way to Vailima. Resting time for the fireman and the locomotive that by now have worked over severe gradients to reach the top.

The breathtaking scenery captured the attention of the passengers in such a way that no one noticed the effort of the locomotive and the crew's effort to make the view possible. From Vailima the train runs over the mountain down the Pandora bank over the level crossing on way back to Hoekfontein. At the end of the trip, two tons of coal was shoveled into the firebox of 113.



Driver Pat behind the controls just before departure



The Cherry Express sailing down from Vailima Halt on her way to Vailiam



Passengers boarding the train at Hoekfontein Station



Number 113 raising steam before departing from Platform 2

International Comment

The following was received from Alan Barnes in the UK:

"Thank for the email, also received you manifesto. If steam is to continue on the main line then it certainly needs all the various groups pulling together, the more groups the more noise they can make!"

In answer to your question about why ... "

[To read this article, click here](#)

Requests for Assistance through Steam in Action

The following was received from Dan Watson in Zambia:

"We operate a new steam trip in Livingstone Zambia, our carriages were rebuilt by Rovos Rail as well in South Africa.

After our first week of operation we have discovered problems with our 10th class loco (leaking stays) and now our loco will be out for around 2-3months while repairs are carried out, we also have a 12th class which is on lease from RSZ but is also about 2 months away as all copper fittings had been removed and sold for scrap as well as needing lots of other fittings that we have on order.

So my question is would FOTR consider leasing a crew and Loco to Zambia for 3 months while we can make the necessary repairs to both of our Locos?

It would be 4 to 5 trips per week on a 13km rebuilt section of the Mulobezi line which runs along next to the Zambezi. I can be contacted on +260 977141 113 A response ASAP would be great

*Kind Regards
Dan Watson
Bushtracks Africa"*

Extending the reach of Steam in Action - An open invitation for steam and rail heritage operators in South Africa to join us.

Daan van Rensburg, the Chairman of the North West Transport Museum, has approached us as follows:

"...You have the goods to establish a steam exhibition and an operational division. Please consider transferring some items to Klerksdorp and have it exhibited and stored in the safe and secure environment inside our huge building. We are very anxious to have a working steam train ..."

To read this article, [click here](#)

Operation Restoration

From the beginning Steam in Action has had a plan. The plan is to save locomotives and once they are saved then the sky is the limit in terms of what we can do with them. Here is our preliminary list of locomotives that we are focussing on:

Items suggested by Reefsteamers include:

1. 15F no. 3046
2. 10 class no. 735
3. Booth steam crane no. 93
4. 12R no. 1947
5. 12AR no. 1535 and our 15F 3016
6. 15F no. 2914
7. 15AR no. 1870 and 16DA no. 876
8. A class tank loco no. 130
9. American built Porter 2-6-2 tank, Simmer and Jack no. 3



15AR No 1870

Items suggested by FOTR include:

1. Complete 15F 3117
2. Restore 15CA 2850
3. Restore 25NC 3404
4. Restore another 5 sitter coaches
5. Acquire generator power for coaches
6. Move to Hercules
7. Aiding in the restoration of the Hercules-Magaliesburg line and the operation of trains thereon-within 5 years
8. Class 15A 1791
9. Class 8D 1223



15F No 3117

Items suggested by Sandstone Heritage Trust include:

1. 3 x Class 19D (for hire)
2. Class 16 DA
3. Class 16E
4. Class 15E
5. Class 15AR
6. Class 23
7. Class 25NC
8. Class 25C
9. GEA Garret
10. GL Garret
11. Class 7
12. Class 6
13. Class 8



Class 7

However this is only the beginning. What do you our Steam in Action members suggest?

Donations

Although official fund raising has not commenced we have started to receive some donations. R5,000 has been made available to Friends of the Rail as a contribution of the restoration of their 15F, No. 3117.

In addition R30,000 has been made available to Reefsteamers to complete the restoration of their 10 Class Locomotive. It should be remembered that Steam in Action's primary function is to save and restore locomotives and it is wonderful to see people contributing in this fashion.

Late Newsflash

We have received a donation of R500,000 from an anonymous supporter of Steam in Action which was left to Steam in Action's discretion as to which locomotives should be restored. See our preliminary list of locomotives listed above. We look forward to suggestions.

To Blog or not to Blog

Does a Steam in Action Blog and Steam in Action's action-orientated approach go together?

We believe so. There are many people who for personal reasons are unable to be with us on the ground. A Blog has the potential to expand awareness of SIA globally and we invite those people who have time and contacts and the inclination to use the Blog to comment, criticize or contribute to anything that we are trying to do within the bigger picture in Southern Africa. Much of what we are doing today is driven by sensible comments from knowledgeable people and if the Blog expands the dialogue then let's do it.

The Blogger user Steam in Action has invited you to contribute to the private blog: Steam in Action.

To contribute to this blog, visit: <http://steam-in-action.blogspot.com/>

You will need to sign in with a Google Account to confirm the invitation and start posting to this blog. If you do not have a Google Account yet, we will show you how to get one in minutes.

To learn more about Blogger and starting your own free blog visit <http://www.blogger.com>.

Comments by Steam in Action Members

You were all invited to comment on Registration. Boy are we blown over by the generosity and by the sensible points and offers which are coming in. Here are some examples:

"As an ex South African resident in Guernsey happy to assist in providing trust and or director services in a personal capacity at no charge." writes Kit Meredith

"My wife and I have been running The Society of International Railway Travellers for 25 years. We specialize in high-end international rail tours. We are VERY interested in your venture, hope to do business with you and wish you the very best." writes Owen Hardy

Ian Pretorius writes:

"Let me start by making it clear that I am not upset at all about the action that has been initiated ..."

To read this article, click here

Bryn Morgan writes:

"Plans are being made to develop South African Steam in Miniature on a large scale as an alternative to full size preservation that all can participate in ..."

To read this article, click here

Comments between SAR-L members:

"Very interesting. Sounds like just the thing SA steam needs ..." writes Trevor

To read this article, click here

"Willing to spend some of my leave assisting in steam restoration (willing to learn!); handy with a tool box!" writes Jim Welsh

"I am really pleased to see that something is being done to 25NC 3488. It is wonderful to see a new coat of paint going on her and hopefully we will see her out on the mainline in years to come. Well done to everyone at Sandstone.

Thanks for the Steam in Action email. I have forwarded it to many people around the world.

*Keep up the good work
Regards,
Richard"*

Phil Mortimer writes:

"However, with the scrapping program in full swing, the clock is ticking ..."

To read this article, click here

"Delighted to read about the SIA initiative. It should bring some much needed stability to the SA Heritage rail scene. I am coordinating a tour of the Narrow Gauge railways in South Africa between 11 and 23 May 2008. For more details, go to www.geoffs-trains.com/SANGtour.html or email Geoff at geoff@geoffs-trains.com. Regards Geoff Cooke."

What does Joe Public think?

We all make the mistake of thinking that you have to be a dedicated steam enthusiast to understand the magic. Not so. The following was received by Sandstone recently which tells us a lot about what is happening out there.

Karyn Clarke writes "I recently had the opportunity to watch the Song of the Rails DVD (and others) to get better acquainted with Sandstone. Wow, should have done this long ago ..."

To read this article, click here

Train Schedules

Upcoming Train Excursions.

Friends of the Rail.

On 18 november we have our first Santa Stimela train. destination - Marula Mountain Village-just outside Warmbaths/Bela-Bela. Still space available but filling up fast. Father Christmas will be on board and hand out presents, handed in by the parents before departure, to the children. swimming, game walks, etc. Lovely buffet lunch available @ R35 per person. Private coaches available for corporate groups. Cost of train ride R165 per adult and R25 entrance/ children 7-12 R115 and R15 entrance and children under 6 R70. Private coaches from R6000 for a 55 seater. Booking on the website or 012 548 4090.

Corporate Groups

We still have one coach available on 30 November's corporate train at R5000 - 55-75 seater and two coaches on 7 December. Smaller groups also welcome - R130 per adult

On 14 December at 13h30 we will be running a Tshwane Xplorer for corporates - come and have your office's "closing for the season"- party on the train. Pay only for the coach or individual prices for the smaller group or a total package including platters and drinks.

For more information please visit our website - www.friendsoftherail.com or phone Arno or Billy on 012 5484090.



Photographs courtesy of Dave Richardson

(Left) The Narrow Gauge meets the Cape Gauge on the David Rogers Tour, Sandstone, May 2007

(Right) The FOTR 21st Birthday Train nears Cullinan, November 2007

Reefsteamers, Germiston.

Sunday, 18th November - In conjunction with SANRASM to Magaliesburg.
Friday, 23rd November - Private charter to Swallow's Inn. (Sealed Air Africa (Pty) Ltd.)
Saturday, 24th November - Reefsteamer's Christmas train to Magaliesburg. Ho! Ho! Ho!
Sunday, 25th November - In conjunction with SANRASM to Magaliesburg.
Saturday, 1st December - In conjunction with SANRASM to Magaliesburg.
Sunday, 2nd December - Private charter to Swallow's Inn. (Euro Steel)
Friday, 7th to Sunday, 9th December - Proposed weekend trip to Waterval Boven.
Monday, 17th December - In conjunction with SANRASM to Magaliesburg.



2005 Potato Festival
in Bethal with Class 12AR No 1535
and 15F No 2914 heading the train



2006 Rogers Tour
at Battery Halt with Class 12AR No 1535
on a photographic mixed goods train

Photographs courtesy of Aidan Mccarthy

Photographs courtesy
of Shaun Ackerman



Magalies Day Trip
with Reefsteamers
at Crown with
Class 25NC No 3472



Koster Festival
at Battery Halt with
Class 15F No 3016

Sandstone Narrow Gauge Railway, Eastern Free State.

The Sandstone Heritage Trust does not run a daily schedule but we do run trains on a regular basis for groups large and small. For practical purposes it is difficult to steam an engine for under 12-people but there are various tariffs which apply to different locomotives, duration of trip etc. If you would like to visit the Sandstone Heritage Trust and if you would like to ride on trains speak to Hester Papenfus on Tel: +27 (0)51933 2235 or E-mail: Hestertp@sandstone.co.za so that we can tailor make your own experience. Locomotives which are available to be steamed at 24-hours notice are listed in the table on the right:

To view Umgeni's train schedule click onto:

<http://www.umgenisteamrailway.co.za/Calendar.html>

BUILDER	CLASS	NUMBER	SANDSTONE NUMBER	DATED	WORKS NUMBER
Kerr Stuart	NG 4	16	15	1913	1344
Falcon	NG 6	106	6	1895	233
Hanomag	NGG 13	49	7	1928	10599
Henschel	NG 15	17	8	1931	21905
Beyer Peacock	NGG 16	113	3	1939	6923
Hunslet Taylor	NGG 16	153	4	1968	3898
John Fowler		Sandy	5	1914	14316
Avonside		Sezela no. 3	2	1924	1936
Andrew Barclay			1	1916	1459
Orenstein&Koppel	50HP		9	1910	4102
Kerr Stuart	Wren	Little Bess	10	1919	4031
Decauville		Bathala	11	1899	302
Peckett&Son		Sena No. 14	13	1957	2161
Henschel	Brigadelok	Sena No. 2	14	1915	13779
Orenstein&Koppel	40HP		12	1907	2510
Kerr Stuart		ISE3	16	1914	4063

2008. Because Steam in Action has really only just been created we are not yet in a position to confirm specific national rail tours and safaris. However our planners are hard at work putting these together.

In the meantime Chris Janisch, one of our founder members, and Friends of the Rail have come up with some excellent suggestions for trains that the planners are now reviewing in cooperation with the authorities. We invite our SIA members to come forward and tell us what their dream trip would look like. Nothing in our opinion cannot be achieved without the right effort, dedication, and the goodwill of all concerned. This is what Chris had in mind:

1. The spectacle of a Garratt hauled train over the Belfast-Lydenburg-Steelpoort line, and also on the Machadodorp-Breyten line. These are famous Garratt haunts from the past.
2. Who would like to see the Tzaneen-Pietersburg passenger recreated, behind David Shepherd's 15F, No. 3052?
3. A short-tendered 15F hauling a mixed train on the Cullinan branch.
4. hugely historic locos such as the 10th class, 8th class and 15A, No. 1791 operating on the Main Line again.
5. Excursions on the Elgin Valley Railway who are in the process of getting an Access Agreement. This will allow trains to be run over the world famous Sir Lowry's Pass.
6. Excursions from the city of Cape Town. Cape Town is a hugely popular destination for international tourists.

Reefsteamers suggestions are equally interesting. They include the following:

1. The glorious sounds of a 15CA operating a special goods train on the Belfast to Lydenburg and Steelpoort lines in conjunction with the GMAM garratt.
2. Double headed long tendered 15F's running a passenger train on the Magaliesburg to Zeerust line incorporating David Shepherd's 15F, No. 3052 in this wonderful spectacle.
3. Double headed 25NC's on the Bethlehem to Modderpoort line with both freight and passenger consists, this could also include a 15AR like No. 1850 with both passenger and freight consists.
4. A full on narrow gauge steam festival including destination's like The Sandstone Heritage Trust in the Eastern Free State, Ixopo's Paton Railway and the Apple Express operating out of Port Elizabeth up the Patensie branch and to the top of the line at Avontuur. Some of these destinations should be served by a steam hauled mainline train and where steam cannot operate then a vintage class DE 2 can haul the train.
5. Imagine a 12AR on the Grootvlei to Villiers and Frankfort line with a mixed goods train, recreating the good old days of steam!
6. Again the 12AR but this time with a 19D running a passenger train from Grootvlei to Bethlehem through the spectacular farming scenery of the Free State.
7. A possible South African "rondomtalie" steam and vintage diesel hauled tour around the country which will include the assistance of all the clubs and steam operators so that everyone has a chance to show what they are doing in their triumphant success in steam preservation.



Photographs courtesy of Paul Hloben

Newsflash

Special SMS Services. Very often train trips are arranged at short notice and we would like everybody to know about them so that they can buy a ticket (preferably) or perhaps just come on and take photos. Please e-mail us your cell phone number so that we can put you onto our SMS platform. No Spam - you will only be told something important where almost instant communications is called for. Please send your cell phone number to babitan@sandstone.co.za.

Available Merchandise

[Click here for a more detailed description of DVD/VHS items](#)

Prices in ZAR Rands only (EXCLUDING VAT)
For International Pricing, contact
joannewest@btinternet.com

DVD / VHS (approximate running times)

REEFSTEAMERS' GREAT TREK

R125.00

Running Time: 1 h 15 min

Reefsteamers' Great Trek is an edited video footage with commentary made by Reefsteamers members and steam train photographers.

REEFSTEAMERS' GREAT TREK 2

R125.00

NEW! Running Time: 2 hours

The video includes some spectacular footage from one of the most picturesque lines in South Africa - the Bethlehem-Bloemfontein line skirting the snow-covered Drakensberg Mountains and meandering between sandstone cliffs.

ON THE FOOTPLATE

R125.00

Running Time: 1 h 25 min

The closest you'll ever get to driving, firing and servicing a steam locomotive.

ADVENTURE STEAM

R125.00

Running Time: 1 h 14 min

In this documentary, we explore the past, present and future of the narrow gauge locomotives in South Africa.

STEAMING UNDER AFRICAN SKIES

R125.00

Running Time: 1 h 15 min

A hands on experience for steam enthusiasts from all over the world. At one time 9 locomotives were operating!

THE SANDSTONE CHRONICLES

R125.00

Running time: 2 h 17 min

Uncovering Heritage Treasure with the Sandstone Heritage Trust. This new release covers the making of a world class Narrow Gauge railway.

THE GREAT 100 WORKING (VHS)

R50.00

Running Time: 60 min

In April 1999, South Africa played host to The Great 100 Working. This was a three-day celebration of our heritage, which culminated The Great One Hundred Working World Record Attempt.

THE GREAT 400 WORKING VOL. 1 (VHS)

R50.00

Running Time: 60 min

The build up ... The Great 400 Working was South Africa's answer to Australia and was no less than the reclamation of our World Record.

THE GREAT 400 WORKING VOL. 2 (VHS)

R50.00

Running Time: 60 min

The Great 400 Working volume II is the culmination of everything you saw in volume I. The moment where months of hard work finally bore fruit.

RETURN OF THE GIANTS (VHS)

R50.00

Running time: 1 h 20 min

This video explores the problem of railway decline and the potential for upliftment. It revisits the glory days of steam traction on the line, and traces the development of the company that could change its future.

THE APPLE EXPRESS

R125.00

Running time: 60 min

The scenic railway that runs from port Elizabeth to Avontuur in the Eastern Cape is one of the very few narrow gauge railways left in South Africa today.

SONG OF THE RAILS

R125.00

Running time: 60 min

In this video, we explore the history of the Sandstone railway and its stable of locomotives.

Calendar

2007 STEAM TRAINS WALL CALENDAR

R45.00

A2 size 67x47cm

This large bi-monthly A2 size calendar of 7 pages including the cover page, features spectacular locomotives in action at different locations in South Africa - Little Karoo, George-Knysna, Magaliesburg, Bethlehem-Fixboro line. The locomotives featured are the following classes: 19B, GO Garratt, 25NC, 15F, NG15 and NGG16 and 15CA.

Posters

A3 size (42x30cm)

R25.00

1. GO Garratt locomotive outside Oudtshoorn - Little Karoo
2. Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe 19B locomotive on Swartvlei bridge
3. 25NC locomotive on the Bethlehem-Bloemfontein line

Suitable for framing. An ideal gift for kids and for those who appreciate the glorious steam era.

Books (Hardback)

THE SANDSTONE STEAM RAILROAD - THE FIRST TEN YEARS

R145.00

The long awaited official record of the Sandstone Heritage Trust rail collection is now available. Produced in full colour in easy to manage A5 format, this 136 page informative publication documents the history of the collection with full details of each locomotive and rolling stock item for both 2ft narrow gauge and 3'6" gauge. Fully illustrated with many historical photographs from some of SA's leading photographers it is also a comprehensive guide for the classes of locomotive and rolling stock held in the collection.

The introduction has been written by world famous wildlife conservationist and rail enthusiast, David Shepherd.

Placing your Orders

In the very near future, you will be able to purchase merchandise from our Virtual Shop at www.steam-in-action.com, but for the meantime, please use the following channels:

International Orders: Contact Joanne West on joannewest@btinternet.com

Southern African Orders: Contact Babita Nathoo on babitan@sandstone.co.za

Parting Thoughts

Gauteng ... Steam on your Doorstep. Les Smith from Reefsteamers writes: Our recent trips to Magaliesburg have proved to be a roaring success with the general public at large, as well as a large number of railway enthusiast. One needs to look no further than the SAR Url on the world wide web where comments have ranged from "superlative" to "pure professional".

A typical run to Magaliesburg begins the day before, with the locomotive being lit up, cleaned and thoroughly inspected for roadworthiness. The locomotive is "baby sitted" by the loco minder during the night, until the arrival of the crew for the day at around 04H00.

The train is then run as empty coaching stock to Boksburg East station, where our passengers board the train. The trains generally leave for Magaliesburg at 07H15. Safe parking is provided for at the station.

The route taken by our train is via Germiston, President, Juipiter, Kazerne, Booysens, Lanlaagte, Krugersdorp and finally Magaliesburg which is some 93 Kilometres from Boksburg East. The route gives the passenger an unusual and fascinating view of Johannesburg from the Southern side.

Our train generally consists of 5 day sitter coaches, one sleeper coach, one lounge car, one bar car (fully licensed) and one kitchen car which serves the likes of toasted sandwiches (rated as the best ever by our passengers) cold drinks, tea, coffee, crisps, sweets etc. Arrival time at Magaliesburg is normally around 10H30 where passengers have a choice of two lunch venues. viz the Magaliesburg Country Hotel or the Swallow's Inn.

Our trains then departs from Magaliesburg at 15H00 for the return journey back to Boksburg East. This gives the passenger more than enough time for a nice leisurely lunch, a swim in the pool, or some nice cold ones in the superb ladies bar. The return journey is the highlight of the day for the passengers, as the climb from Magaliesburg to Krugersdorp is quite spectacular, with steep gradients and twisting curves. The locomotive has to really work hard on this section, with the most enjoyable sound effects coming from the locomotive. A steam locomotive is the only man made machine which can display it's emotions. I can well remember the elderly gentleman on our last trip who had tears of joy running down his face from listening to the evocative beats coming from the locomotive!

Arrival time back at Boksburg East is approximately 18H30. This is not the end of the day for the train crew however, as they still have to return the train to Germiston locomotive depot where the train is shunted into the shed, and the locomotive's fire is dropped. The memory of the elderly gentleman's tears is reward enough for all those who worked the train.

Visit our Founding Members

