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Your comments, queries and suggestions are always welcome!

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

From the Ed

Welcome to our May Newsletter. Although dominated by the travesty of Millsite and the cutting of locomotives marked for preservation there are some other good news stories as well from the Clubs. We also have good news of locomotives that have been saved and some positive actions in preservation so it is not all doom and gloom.

As you will read below Steam in Action was taken entirely by surprise over the actions by Transnet at Millsite Depot but all efforts are being made to alleviate the situation.

You will recall recently that we launched our donations appeal but to date the response has been fairly low. In light of what has happened we are going to need funds to save as many locomotives as possible, click on this link to pledge your donation, <http://www.steam-in-action.com/donations.html> it is more important and urgent than ever.

I normally like to say, "enjoy the read", but this month not everything you read will be that enjoyable.

Millsite Destruction

It appears that rail preservation has gone back 20 years as the scrap metal company, Reclam, has moved into Millsite Depot and, amongst other items, cut up four locomotives originally earmarked for preservation with a fifth one scheduled for cutting. SIA is making all efforts to halt this carnage but communication with the relevant parties at Transnet has been almost impossible. To put what has happened into perspective we must go back a number of years when HRASA was presented with a list of which locomotives were to be scrapped and which were to be saved. HRASA agreed to this list as the reality was not every single steam locomotive could be saved. What should be saved was of historical value. In the last year locomotives have been cut by Reclam as part of a transparent tender process at Germiston, Bloemfontein, Kroonstad and Bethlehem.

When SIA was formed last year, it was agreed to partner HRASA in ensuring that the remaining locomotives earmarked for preservation would be secured for the future. As HRASA has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Transnet which covers, among other issues, disposals, HRASA attended a number of meetings with Transnet to finalise the process for the disposals. Transnet had made it clear that they wished to move such locos and other equipment off their properties and that HRASA would be consulted at all times. In view of its partnership with SIA we would be kept in the communications loop.

In March of this year SIA met with Vuyo Kahla, a Group Executive at Transnet to introduce him to SIA and discuss various preservation matters, particularly rail tourism. We were joined in the meeting by Susie Mabie, head of the Transnet Foundation for Heritage and Preservation. In the meeting we were told that decisions as to locomotive disposals, the ending of the lease lend moratorium and route/line availability would be processed by the end of May. Although SIA does not have a MOU with Transnet we were assured we would be kept up to date with all future decisions and policy.

Subsequent to this meeting we sent an e-mail, as requested by HRASA, identifying those assets that SIA believed should be saved (see below). This was to be forwarded to Transnet by HRASA but this was never done. On learning this last week, SIA has now sent this directly to Susie Mabie. No response or acknowledgement has yet been received despite workable solutions being contained in the document. Millsite being specifically mentioned.

And then came Millsite! Although the first alarm bells were rung on the 15th May, Reclam had been hard at work since late April. During this period a number of steam locomotives, diesel locomotives, wagons and other equipment were cut. This included four locomotives originally earmarked for retention, Class 23 3286 & 3311 and GMAM's 4061 & 4086.

On the same day a letter was received by HRASA detailing an A&B list of assets which needed to be obtained from Brian Murison. The A list was for scrapping and the B list relates to assets that could be preserved. These assets were at Millsite and at Humewood Road in Port Elizabeth. When the items to be saved had been identified they were to be moved off the relevant property by June 27th. SIA was not privy to this information directly from Transnet although it was signed by Vuyo Kahla, the very person SIA had met with in March and who promised to keep us updated with all developments!



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www.steam-in-action.com • Email: joannevest@btinternet.com

From: David Richardson [mailto:daver@sandstone.co.za]
Sent: 27 March 2008 16:14
To: Mark Robinson
Cc: joannevest@btinternet.com; Shaun Ackerman
Subject: Lease Lend Locos

Dear Mark,

We met internally yesterday and we have drawn up a list of locos we would like to obtain. These are very much those that are a must to retain and in safe surroundings. I will do this formally on a letterhead later but we all felt you should be aware of our intentions. This is very much an SIA driven list and would be under the auspices of Bloemfontein Steam Museum for the 3'6" locos and Sandstone for the 2ft Narrow gauge examples. There may be other locos at the various locations which we are not aware of but when your audit of loco locations is complete we will address those that we may have missed.

As you have made us aware, Transnet wishes to move as many locos off their property as is possible. In this regard Sandstone is prepared to construct a storage compound at the farm and lay a 3'6" gauge track from Valima to this compound. We would move some of the locomotives we are listing to this area but not all as you will see below. Of course construction will take some time.

We have listed the locos by location:

Millsite:
4AR 1555
5B 723
5R 781
6A 462
10C 772
12A 2111
15A 1791
16R 794
19 1366
GCA 2199
GE 2260

There are of course other locos at Millsite but our offer is to ring fence the entire site and provide 24/7 security on the understanding that SIA would have input as to their eventual disposal. We have discussed this Mark but will just confirm as there does not seem to be pressure at Millsite to move these valuable items.

Witbank:
G 221

Bloemfontein:

15AR 1850
15E 2879
15F 3040
16DA 876
16E 857
23 3300
25NC 3410

P.O. Box 67805 • Bryanston • 2021 • South Africa • Tel: +27 11 805 4692
Directors: Michael Myers • David Richardson • Shaun Ackerman

25NC 3454
6F 524
7F 981
11 926,929,932 ex FSG 5, 6 & 7

As Sandstone has an existing lease on the property with Transnet and has provided security for 7 years we feel that these locos can be safely kept at their current location.

Beaconsfield:

16E 858
25 3511

As both these locos are in the care of Steamnet 2000 they will be safely kept in their current location and under Steam 2000's custodianship.

Voorbaai

19B 1412

George Museum

19C 2439
GEA 4023
GF 2401
GMA 4070
GMA 4122
GMA 4128
GO 2575

We understand these locomotives to be in a safe environment where they can remain for now.

Ashton:

14CRB 2010

Again we believe this is a safe environment but we are investigating with the municipality if they wish to retain the loco.

Cape Town:
Monument Station:
15F2916
25NC 3422
26 3450

We are aware of the vandalism and theft occurring here and we are in contact with Ian Pretorius to formulate a plan to arrest this.

Epping:

16D 860
16DA 879
15A 1970
15F 3153

This is believed to be a safe environment. Can you advise?

Jan Kempdorp:

We are not in possession of the identities of locos there but as it is Defence Force Property we assume it to be safe. Can you advise the future of this storage area?

2 ft Narrow Gauge:

Escort:
NGG13 58

Joubertina:
NGG13 80 (plus van)

Patensie:
NGG13 81

Humewood Road:

NGG13 79
NG15 132, 144, 145, 148
All wagons in shed area.

Avontuur:

NG15 147

All these locomotives are heavily vandalised and need to be moved to a place of safety.

These are the locomotives that we believe should come to us as lease lend by default except where they can immediately be placed with a club. In all instances where we take custody and provide security we would expect SIA to be given major input into their final custodians.

There are a number of questions about the movement of these locomotives:

1 Will Transnet offer to subsidise or even fully cover the costs of movement.

2 We can offer to move many by rail using steam traction if point 1 is favourable and that all access charges are waived for such movements.

Mark, we would appreciate your urgent feedback on our proposals.

Kind Regards
Dave Richardson
Executive Director
Steam in Action

Attempts to obtain the A&B list were to no avail as Brian Murison is on leave and other parties at Transnet involved in the disposals were either reluctant to disclose the list or incommunicado. How would it be possible to identify what was to be saved and move them by 27th June? SIA can only surmise that the Millsite B list relates to the priceless collection in the compound area in the depot. Regardless of the lists we know which locos should be saved.

This week SIA learned that the plan for the Millsite Destruction was formulated on 8th February 2008 and that the five locos mentioned above were marked for cutting. This is prior to the SIA meeting with Transnet in March where it was not disclosed and during ongoing negotiations with HRASA. The cutting began in late April but as of now no one has had sight of the tender for this process.

The real question is, is Transnet playing open cards? Obviously not but there are some serious issues involved. Tender processes with Transnet have to be transparent, this does not seem to be the case here. Reclam are cutting and a senior Reclam person reported to an SIA representative this week that "they would cut everything". This raises questions over the content of the Transnet letter to HRASA or "ultimatum" as it really is.

The next issue is that of Heritage assets which are protected under South African law via the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). They were unaware of the situation although they had been involved in the process of identifying the various assets.

SIA member, Ivor Markman, kindly sent us some relevant sections of the 1999 Act.

3]3 National estate

(1) For the purposes of this Act, those heritage resources of South Africa which are of cultural significance or other special value for the present community and for future generations must be considered part of the national estate and fall within the sphere of operations of heritage resources authorities.

(vi) objects of scientific or technological interest;

(f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;

5]5 General principles for heritage resources management

(b) every generation has a moral responsibility to act as trustee of the national heritage for succeeding generations and the State has an obligation to manage heritage resources in the interests of all South Africans;

(5) Heritage resources contribute significantly to research, education and tourism and they must be developed and presented for these purposes in a way that ensures dignity and respect for cultural values.

CHAPTER II

PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE RESOURCES (ss 27-47)

(10) No person may damage, deface, excavate, alter, remove from its original position, subdivide or change the planning status of a provisionally protected place or object without a permit issued by a heritage resources authority or local authority responsible for the provisional protection.

32]32 Heritage objects

(1) An object or collection of objects, or a type of object or list of objects, whether specific or generic, that is part of the national estate and the export of which SAHRA deems it necessary to control, may be declared a heritage object, including-

(g) objects of scientific or technological interest;

(13) No person may destroy, damage, disfigure or alter any heritage object, or disperse any collection which is listed in Part II of the register, without a permit issued by SAHRA.

(15) It is the responsibility of the owner or custodian of a heritage object listed in Part II of the register of heritage objects, to keep the heritage object in good condition and in a secure place.

(17) No person may carry out any work of restoration or repair of a heritage object, listed in Part II of the register of heritage objects, without a permit issued by a duly authorised representative of SAHRA.

Part 2

General protections (ss 33-38)

(3) The Minister or the MEC, as the case may be, may make regulations in terms of which the magistrate of the district concerned may-

(a) levy admission of guilt fines up to a maximum amount of R10 000 for infringement of the terms of this Act for which such heritage resources authority is responsible; and
(g) within the terms of this Act, commits or attempts to commit any other unlawful act, violates any prohibition or fails to perform any obligation imposed upon him or her by its terms, or who counsels, procures, solicits or employs any other person to do so, shall be guilty of an offence and upon conviction shall be liable to such maximum penalties, in the form of a fine or imprisonment or both such fine and such imprisonment, as shall be specified in the regulations under subsection (3).
(13) In any case involving vandalism, and whenever else a court deems it appropriate, community service involving conservation of heritage resources may be substituted for, or instituted in addition to, a fine or imprisonment.

As most of these assets are over 60 years old, they would appear to fall under the act.

The real travesty, though, is the fact that Transnet has not shown any transparency in its dealings with the heritage rail movement, not even its nominated partner, HRASA. Worthless promises of cooperation have been made and the rail preservation community ignored. The Millsite Destruction has highlighted this situation in the worst possible way.

Steam in Action has received tremendous worldwide support from its members in this matter after circularising them all to express their dissatisfaction over the Millsite situation to Transnet. ([click here to view circular](#))

There are some full mailboxes at the Carlton Centre! We just hope that Transnet will have the courtesy to read them and take note of the content. This willful destruction of National assets is unacceptable.

Rest assured that the matter is not yet over and SIA is determined to meet with the relevant parties at Transnet to resolve the issue and protect the assets. We will report back to all SIA members as soon as we have some resolution. In the meantime representations to other stakeholders in this matter are ongoing in other areas of government. Steam is in Action.



Photographs courtesy of Steam in Action and Reefsteamers members

Photo left: GEA 4022 clearly marked 'R' for retain

MEMBER'S MAILS ON MILLSITE

Following the SIA circular to all members calling for representation to Transnet on the Millsite situation, there was a magnificent response. Here is a small selection that sets the tone of how you, our members, feel about this situation.

“I urge you to urgently intervene as these locomotives are priceless and irreplaceable.

Was a legal tender put out for the scrapping of these locomotives?

Please ensure that the scrapping of these locomotives is stopped as a matter of urgency as they were put on the museum collection by Transnet Heritage Foundation. (A division of Transnet Freight Rail)

Kind regards,

Les Smith.”

“Dear Susie,

You will recall the interview that you so kindly gave us for the Steam in Action DVD a while back. We are currently working on a television series provisionally called "Stimela Afrika", which is obviously going to feature Southern Africa's steam heritage quite prominently. The events taking place at Millsite are not in harmony with what you said in your interview, so we would like to give you the opportunity of clarifying the issue to camera. We will be happy to conduct another interview with you at your convenience. Let us know the date and the time and the place and we will be there.

In the meantime, I hope you will put a stop to what is taking place at the Millsite Depot. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Ron Nell
FRAMELINE”

“As a member of the international community watching TFR's actions closely in this situation, I trust that you will use your influence to ensure that the historically significant items are offered on lease-lend to appropriate preservation groups who can offer permanent protection to them.

Kind Regards

John N. Middleton, Ph.D.”

“PLEASE, PLEASE REFRAIN FROM CUTTING UP STEAM LOCOS EARMARKED FOR PRESERVATION!!!!!!!!!!
THIS IS A TRAVESTY.
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT THIS COULD BE WORTH IN TOURISM REVENUE FOR SOUTH AFRICA?
THOUGHT NOT....

Joseph J Neethling
Architect & Acoustical Consultant”

“I urge you to take immediate action to cease all further scrapping of your valuable steam locomotive collection. If Transnet has no interest in their preservation, then Steam in Action group has made it clear to you that it will secure the locomotives for preservation instead. There is therefore no excuse for allowing the current state of affairs to continue.
I trust that you will pass on this message and all others that you receive on the subject, to the senior executives of Transnet.

Kind regards
Chris Newman”

“As a Steam in Action member I strongly urge you to intervene as a matter of extreme urgency to stop such wanton destruction and to launch an enquiry as to who authorised such action and to hold them personally accountable.

D.A. Hartmann
Steam In Action member”

“As an international member of the Steam in Action initiative I was shocked to be told that steam locomotives marked for preservation at the Millsite Depot near Johannesburg are being cut up for scrap by your appointed contractors Reclam.

I am very concerned that irreplaceable industrial heritage of South Africa is being destroyed in this manner, despite offers from the Steam in Action initiative to Transnet to secure the locomotives in question.

I am equally concerned that Transnet have given specific assurances that the steam locomotives marked for preservation would not be scrapped.

These actions by Transnet convey a very poor image of Transnet to the international preservation community and are likely to be widely reported and adversely commented on.

I therefore believe it is imperative that you personally intervene to ensure that the scrapping of all preserved locomotives ceases immediately and discussions are initiated with interested groups such as Steam in Action.

The Steam in Action initiative is not just about preserving South Africa's industrial heritage - it is about building a meaningful global tourist industry around this heritage, thereby creating much needed jobs and sustainable income for local communities in South Africa. Once destroyed this heritage is gone forever - and with it the jobs and income.

Your urgent intervention would be much appreciated.

Thank you

Kit Meredith
St Martins
Guernsey,
Channel Islands
United Kingdom

Chris Janisch was one of the first visitors to the Millsite Destruction. Here he describes what he saw:

"Following reports from various players in the heritage industry that scrapping was underway at Millsite, I decided to go and see for myself on Friday 16 May. Having been told by the HRASA chairman that Millsite was safe for the meantime, the news came as a shock. Together with fellow FOTR member Gabor Kovacs we entered the shed and went down to the coal stage area. Here we found the remains of some GMAs, 15Fs and a 23 alongside empty gas bottles. Nearer the coal stage we found the Reclam scrappers in action, busy with 15F 2921 and 25NC 3414. We spoke to the foreman who said that they have 6000 tons to scrap- wagons and other rolling stock included. They began at the end of April. Terrible scenes of decay and destruction greeted us. Shelled and gutted locos and tenders. A boiler lying on its side. Small steam crane with bell couplers hacked off. Burned out coach under a rotten water column. Locomotives recorded here were: 15F 2906/2921/2922/2975/2987, 15CA 2849 plus another unnumbered CA boiler no.8440, 23 3286, 25NC 3414.

It appears that the 2 incomplete GMAs, 23 3311, 15CA 2808 and 2 15Fs are already cut.

We then went up to the shed lines and found the following locos here:
15CAs 2039/2040/2041/2077/2803/2825/2833, 15Fs2902(Sanrasm)/2904/2908/2913/2919/2934/3075/3098, 14CRB 1771, a 3R.
These all seem in poor condition although many would be good sources of spares.

The museum compound was then done. Piles of burned out wreckage and rubble, white metal bearings stolen, burned out coaches, spares and chimneys scattered around, van Schoor machines and whistle boards returning to nature. What can one say.

All the national collection was here- Also 15CAs 2836/2840/2820, 15Fs 2940/2946/3001/3079. FOTR requested 15A 1791 was found and photted- perhaps one day she will return to the rails.

Near the ashpits were 10C 776, the GM and GE Garratts.

The vast sheds which once housed the preserved steamers were largely empty, save for a few diesels. Such huge potential as a steam centre, all thrown away when THF relocated to Cape Town.

The running shed was fairly busy with numerous 34s throbbing away, including one in old SAR livery.

So sad to see a once-busy steam center in absolute decay. There will now be a rush to save and procure what we can before all is lost. As we drove off, all that remained was to report and publish the state of matters so that you, the enthusiast public, knows what is going on."

SANRASM Update

We would like to thank all our SIA members for communicating with us on the subject. There appears to be general discontent at the state of the assets under SANRASM's jurisdiction with particular emphasis on some of the older items which in some cases are national monuments.

We have taken the matter up with the South African Heritage Resources Agency but so far without success. Steam in Action, as part of its action mandate, is also taking up the issue of some of these locomotives with Eskom who made them available to SANRASM in trust but subject to certain conditions regarding their upkeep etc. It would appear that these conditions have been breached.

In order to try and progress the matter further one of our founder members addressed a letter to SANRASM which can be viewed via the link below. We encourage SIA members to read this letter and to comment on any specific aspect that might occur to them. We appreciate your support because Steam in Action would become a meaningless organisation that stands by and watches so many valuable locos being destroyed.

[Click here to view letter](#)

ANOTHER ACR LOCO SAVED

We recently mentioned that another NGG16 had been saved and we can now reveal that it is the Phil Girdlestone modified NGG16A No: 141 from ACR. It has been saved by father and son Phil and Phil Mortimer, here is their story.

Class NGG16 No: 141

Why do two supposedly rational human beings become involved with 50 tons of rusting steel? What drives us to put time, money and effort into purchasing and restoring something from a bygone age? That is the question that my father and I have been trying to answer for the past few months since we set out to acquire and save for posterity the 2ft NGG16A Garratt No: 141 that was until recently lying dumped at the Port Shepstone shed in Natal, South Africa, and has now been moved to the Sandstone Heritage Trust located at Ficksburg in the Eastern Free State.

Both of us have been interested in steam traction for as long as we can remember. Dad is old enough to remember steam traction in every day use in post-war Britain and whilst I am too young for those memories, railways and steam traction have always held a fascination for me. As a youngster, trips to the UK heritage railways were cherished. For a while we both became involved in the heritage rail scene, but as time passed, everyday pressures intervened and active involvement in rail heritage lapsed. But, the interest in steam rail traction never faded and the dream was always to own a steam locomotive.

Our interest in steam traction was not just from the heritage point of view, though in most cases steam traction can now only be experienced at heritage rail sites. We've always been interested in modern steam traction and considered that in most countries it died an early death and could have been developed to a much greater potential. One region in which steam lasted much longer was Southern Africa, where, until comparatively recently, steam locomotives were the predominant motive power for rail transportation. South Africa in particular, with its dearth of readily available oil, developed an extensive fleet of modern, high power steam locomotives for use on both its main lines (Cape gauge 3'6" lines) such as the Class 25 NC 4-8-4's and GMAM Garratts, as well as modern steam traction on its 2ft gauge feeder lines in the form of NGG16 Garratts and NG15 2-8-2's.

Regrettably, in the more recent past, rail transportation has waned in the face of truck competition with the closure of many of the narrow gauge feeder lines and as a result, some of this heritage is now being lost. However, prior to this a number of successful experiments were conducted by South African railways to explore the possibility of improving steam traction and extending its use. The most well known of these is the Class 26 "Red Devil" on the main-line which was a modified 25NC that was given what is termed as the Porta treatment with installation of a higher efficiency gas producer combustion system (GPCS) in the firebox and improved draughting and lubrication, with a view to enhancing power and efficiency of use, whilst reducing fuel consumption. Unfortunately, with the rush to dieselization, these experiments came to an unsatisfactory conclusion before the loco could really prove itself and no further conversions were made.

Improved efficiency experiments were not just limited to the main line. The Alfred County Railway was a 2 ft narrow gauge line running from Paddock to Port Shepstone and made an initial commitment to retain steam traction. It was mainly powered using NGG16 Garratts, some of the most powerful and modern 2ft gauge steam locomotives ever built. These locomotives as built were fundamentally sound with modern innovations such as roller bearings, high steam capacity boilers, etc., but reflected the design principles of the time of their construction. As a result, they had a number of limitations. But could they be further improved?



Phil Girdlestone with 141



141 on a test run

One way of reducing operating costs is to reduce fuel consumption and improve operating efficiency and to investigate this two locomotives (Nos 141 and 155) were modified along similar lines to the much larger Red Devil, becoming class NGG16A. Garratt No: 141 was the first to be modified in early 1989 by then ACR Chief Mechanical Engineer Phil Girdlestone following experience he had developed previously during conversion of Hunslet "Linda" at the Festiniog Railway in Wales. Modifications included installation of GPCS, Lempor exhaust system, low draught loss spark arrestor, modified valve motion, multi-ring streamlined lightweight piston valves and improved lubrication.

During tests under controlled conditions, it reportedly gave coal savings of at least 20% and the modifications paid for themselves in a short time. Locomotive No: 155 was similarly modified in March 1990, both locomotives being chosen because of the sound condition of their boilers and low mechanical work required. Now classified NGG16A, No: 141 was painted in a striking red livery with silver accents and became known as the "Red Dragon", in keeping with the modified Class 26 "Red Devil" and an allusion to Phil Girdlestone's earlier links to the Festiniog Railway in Wales. Two bronze welsh dragons, the national flag of Wales, were even installed on the cabsides for a time. It is ironic that today the Festiniog Railway is rebuilding the Welsh Highland Railway and has selected as motive power ex-South African railways NGG16 Garratts sourced from the now sadly defunct Alfred County Railway in South Africa.

After modification, 141 (and 155) were both reported to be successful, with fuel savings reported to be in the order of 20%, reduced maintenance and greater availability, a cleaner exhaust due to higher efficiency combustion, which reduced char production, resulting in less spark throwing and reduced line-side fire nuisance. As such, 141 was deemed a significant success.

However, the conversion was controversial and not liked or understood by all and the experiment was not repeated. No further conversions were made and plans for an all new narrow gauge Garratt class, the NGG17, developed as a result of performance improvements obtained from the NGG16A experiments, but eliminating the inherent limitations due to conversion of an existing locomotive, were shelved and the project remains stillborn. Changes were also coming to South African railways and the ACR, which used steam traction less and less, and eventually dieselised.

The loco continued working for the ACR until taken out of service in 1998 following minor derailment damage and the expiry of its boiler certificate. Its sister No:155 steamed on until 2005, working on the Banana Express tourist trains, until taken out of service following boiler damage. At some point, it had its engine units exchanged with non-modified ones and remains in this guise, now located at the Sandstone Heritage Trust. Politics and the gradual decline of the ACR meant that 141 never returned to service and instead was dumped at the back of Port Shepstone shed, where it remained for the next 10 years, unloved, largely forgotten and cannibalized for spare parts.

The following decade was not good for rail transport or steam traction in South Africa. Steam traction was eliminated on a regular basis in 1991 and the Alfred County Railway was closed down and liquidated. The future of the Port Shepstone-Harding line appears bleak at best with tenders out for its scrapping. The outlook of steam traction and modern steam traction in South Africa appeared dark.

Which is where we entered the story.

Modern steam technology fascinates us and we've always wondered how much further it could have been developed. The "Red Devil" and NGG16A experiments pointed the way, but with the elimination of

steam traction at the time in South Africa, the last major bastion of modern steam power, it appeared that this was a largely academic consideration. Things became a little more interesting when the Ffestiniog Railway in Wales started rebuilding the Welsh Highland Railway and selected NGG16 Garratts as the motive power. We have followed this project for years and I have become fascinated by Garratts, both large and small. It was through the WHR we came across a concern called the Sandstone Heritage Trust based on a farm in South Africa, which had this wonderful collection of old agricultural artifacts. More importantly, it had a private railway powered in part by NGG16 narrow gauge Garratts. I started following the news coming out of SHT and was impressed at the speed at which seemingly derelict equipment, both rail and non-rail, were rebuilt and put back in to working order and made to earn their keep once again!

However, it was these beautiful, powerful, shiny black NGG16's in tip-top condition snorting up and down this private railway that always attracted my attention. Superpower on 24 inches! Impressive. One such article described the proposed scrapping of the Port Shepstone-Harding line and the dereliction at Port Shepstone. Accompanying it were a series of photos of derelict NGG16 Garratts, including a rather forlorn looking rusty red one missing its chimney. This it turned out was No:141, one of the hopes of modern steam power. Ideas slowly turned over, some enquiries to SHT of the status of these locos were made, but nothing happened until it was reported that they might be for sale. Suddenly, a crazy idea might just become possible. Pictures of No:141 showed that it was not in the best of shape, but what if it could be obtained for scrap price? It would certainly be a unique item, both in terms of steam power's potential and South Africa's rail and engineering heritage. It's preservation for posterity seemed attractive.

As always with seemingly crazy ideas, thoughts were kicked around for a while, some approaches were made, and the idea limped along. But it just wouldn't die. What if a major piece of modern steam heritage could be saved and made to run again. Over time, numerous conversations occurred, piggy-banks were inspected and raided and eventually it was decided that this might just be a once in a life-time opportunity. We are still amazed that after assembling a proposal to purchase the loco, it was accepted! The mechanics of the purchase and relocation took some time to sort out, but today No:141 resides at its new home at the Sandstone Heritage Trust, where she is being assessed and put into safekeeping. A lot of work will be required before she steams again. But the adventure is just beginning. For now it slumbers in its shed until its rebuild can be funded, but hopefully it won't be too long before the "Red Dragon" is once again snorting it's way across the fields doing it's intended job - pulling trains and working to earn it's keep.

Although this project was commenced as a private initiative before the advent of Steam -in-Action, it has always been the intention that the loco would be available to the wider community as a whole. As a result, since these aims are similar to those of SIA, we decided to ask the Sandstone Heritage Trust to act as custodians of No:141 due to their extensive facilities and experience with this type of loco. Through Sandstone and SIA and the events that they stage, the loco will be widely accessible, not just to us, but to the many people interested in steam rail heritage and technology, whilst it works on the farm railway. After all, what is the good of having a loco such as this if it can't be viewed and used? We are very grateful to the Sandstone Heritage trust for agreeing to act as custodians of No:141 and for providing it with a secure home. We'd also like to thank the many people, both in South Africa and abroad, who've been of assistance to us in pursuing this project. Without them, this wouldn't have happened and we could not have preserved this important artifact. Also, thanks to our better halves who put up with our eccentric interests.



141 Dumped at Port Shepstone in 2008



Another view of 141 in 2008



The modified firebox doors



The secondary airvents for the GPCs



The coal bunker of 141



Crossing with 91 class diesels

ANGOLA LOCO LIST

Although steam traction (and most of the rail network) has been out of action in Angola for many years, a large number of locos still exist. John Batwell sent us this list from Gavin Hamilton (from his website). There are a large number of Garratts still in existence plus No: 405, a CFB 11 class similar to an SAR 19D. Is it time for a rescue mission?

ALL KNOWN CF BENGUELA SURVIVORS

CLASS	TYPE	NUMBER	BUILDER	LOCATION
-	0-4-0ST	01/1A	Hunslet 847/1906	Lobito
5	0-6-2T	No boiler	Esslingen	Huambo Sidings/Dump
5	0-6-2T	Unknown	Esslingen	Huambo Sidings/Dump
6	4-6-0	24	Neilson 5144/1898	Huambo Works
9A	4-8-0	205	North British 23059/1923	Huambo Sidings/Dump
9A	4-8-0	211	North British 23065/1929	Luena Shed
9B	4-8-0	215 or 216	Baldwin -/1920	Huambo Sidings/Dump
9C	4-8-0	224	North British 23981/1923	Huambo Shed
10A	4-8-2+2-8-4	306	Beyer Peacock 6338/1926	Huambo Sidings/Dump
10B	4-8-2+2-8-4	318	Beyer Peacock 6609/1929	Huambo Sidings/Dump
10B	4-8-2+2-8-4	320	Beyer Peacock 6611/1929	Huambo Sidings/Dump
10B+	4-8-2+2-8-4	321	Beyer Peacock 6612/1929	"Kuito" (exact location uncertain)
10B	4-8-2+2-8-4	322	Beyer Peacock 6613/1929	Luena Shed
10C	4-8-2+2-8-4	342	Beyer Peacock 7377/1952	Huambo Sidings/Dump
10D	4-8-2+2-8-4	361	Beyer Peacock 7667/1956	Huambo Shed
10D	4-8-2+2-8-4	364	Beyer Peacock 7670/1956	Huambo Works
10D	4-8-2+2-8-4	370	Beyer Peacock 7676/1956	Huambo Shed
10E*	2-8-2+2-8-2	382	Beyer Peacock 6879/1938	Huambo Sidings/Dump
10E	2-8-2+2-8-2	384	Beyer Peacock 6902/1938	Huambo Sidings/Dump
10E	2-8-2+2-8-2	385	Beyer Peacock 6880/1938	Huambo Sidings/Dump
10E	2-8-2+2-8-2	386	Beyer Peacock 6901/1938	Huambo Sidings/Dump
11	4-8-2	405	North British 26963/1949	Huambo Sidings/Dump

+ As the power bogies of 321 are in Huambo but the loco is elsewhere (identified by worksplate) this loco has obviously had a bogie swap, though without inspecting the loco itself one cannot tell which loco was the "donor".

*The CFB's 10E Garratts were former Rhodesia Railways 16th Class, RR numbers in parenthesis - 382 (610), 384 (617), 385 (611), 386 (616).

ALL KNOWN CF LUANDA SURVIVORS

CLASS	TYPE	NUMBER	BUILDER	LOCATION
~	4-6-0	110	Armstrong Whitworth 620/1924	Luanda - park
501	4-8-2+2-8-4	Unknown	Beyer Peacock 1949	Near Catete
551	4-8-2+2-8-4	Unknown - not 552	Krupp 1954	Near Catete

3052 FIREMAN'S REPORT

As many of you know David Shepherd's 15F 3052 "Avril" is in the care of Reefsteamers and has run a few trips lately. Shaun Ackerman sent us this report by the fireman, Andre van Dyk, from a recent run.

"Hi Shaun,

I feel that I should just give you a bit of feedback concerning yesterday's trip from Germiston through to Magaliesburg, using Class 15F No.3052 'Avril.'

She is now definitely a very nice locomotive to fire after the improvements to the stoker gauges and their piping. At the Germiston Steam locomotive Depot, Piet Steenkamp (Retired Senior Steam Driver.) helped me to set the stoker jets. Thereafter, he traveled in the train behind the locomotive. I operated the stoker's jets, blowing them at 250kPA for about 95% of the time, with the remaining 5% of the trip blowing them at 300kPA. I gave the locomotive enough time to burn away the newly fed coal.

On all the upgrades, I had the injector on, and at the time we arrived at the top when the regulator was shut, the boiler was $\frac{3}{4}$ full and the steam pressure never dropped below 150 Pounds. At Maraisburg, the fire was still so low that it looked like we recently cleaned the fire. At Krugersdorp, I saw that I had occasionally blown the stoker jets a bit too hard; but it wasn't a problem with the fire still quite low on the fire bars. From Krugersdorp onwards, I just kept the back corners full and kept the firebox warm for the last stretch to Magaliesburg.

Upon arrival at Magaliesburg, the firebox level hadn't even risen halfway. It was still practically a flat fire and there were just small ashy clinkers to get rid of. We cleaned the fire quickly in less than ten minutes. Promptly after fire cleaning, we coupled up to the train again and still had 150 pounds of steam with a full boiler.



Some of No.3052 Avril's new friends. Sitting in front is Dawie Viljoen, Trainee Fireman. At rear left is Andre van Dyk, fireman and author of the report and Shaun Ackerman, driver, stands at rear right. The locomotive in the picture is actually Class 25(NC) No.3472 'Elize'

This is definitely one of the best trips that I've had for a long time. My father (Frans van Dyk) also commented that the locomotive is very strong. He said that the locomotive just ran away with the load. (12 coaches and an auxiliary water tanker - approx 560tons.) I reckon that this locomotive is in peak condition, which is good as we will use her for the Free State Explorer Trip.

Regards,
Andre van Dyk”

CHECKLIST: HOW TO MOVE A LOCO

Although the two Class 25NC locos scheduled to be moved from Bethlehem to Ficksburg are now to be moved by Transnet, Shaun Ackerman detailed the regime that needs to be followed when moving dead locomotives. It's not just hook up and go!

“Dear Gert,

I would like to confirm some thing's with you regarding the two 25NC's that we will haul on behalf of Sandstone from Bethlehem to Ficksburg on Friday the 11th April.

As they will be dead hauled the following will need to be taken into account:

- Their vacuum brake system will have to function if possible throughout, the train pipe leading from the ejector can just be blanked off.
- As their mechanical lubricators are totally disconnected from the entire oiling system, the return cranks and connecting rods will need to be removed and stowed.
- The cross heads will need to be blocked and the valves centralised and secured.
- Both locomotives must be pre greased on ALL axle boxes and coupling rods throughout with white bearing grease only and NOT graphite grease. (EP 2 - High pressure bearing grease is the type to use)
- Please try and get Transnet (diesel depot) to couple up to the locomotives and test the vacuum brakes all together to be sure they all function properly to avoid any problems on the day we must collect them.
- Just be sure that the lines that the locomotives are standing on are free so that we can get access to them.

I think I have covered everything but please don't hesitate to contact me if you need assistance.

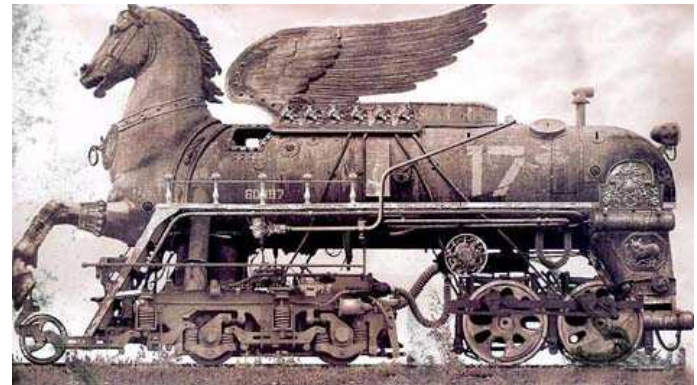
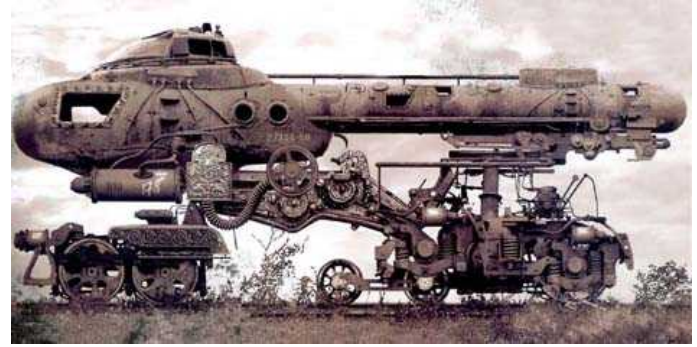
Br,
Shaun”

15AR NO: 2016 QUEENSTOWN



LOCOMOTIVE ART

Errol Ashwell sent us these amazing “steam sculptures” designed by funky artists from Belarus - Vladimir Tsesler and Sergei Voichenko. Brilliant!



15AR No: 2016 was a static exhibit in Queenstown Museum from 1980 until recently when it was moved to the new Queens Casino in Queenstown as a feature exhibit in the railway themed building. It has been cosmetically restored to its former glory by Sandstone Heritage Trust. Although it will never run again it is safe for posterity. Steam in Action!

Letters from our Members

John Batwell is a mine of information and sent us some corrections on recent articles.

“A correction to the location of industrial NBL 12A 26759/51 - this loco belonged to British Airways Senior Capt, Nick Newport, who donated the 4-8-2 to SANRASM in early 2003 and was relocated from Germiston Shed. The decision was motivated at a time when then Spoornet talked of charging "parking fees" for steam locos (affecting particularly individual owners) on its property and with the on-going theft problems, not that the Krugersdorp site is obviously any safer than Germiston or any other location in this sadly "runaway-crime oriented" country. SANRASM did give the impression to Newport at the time that the 12A would be considered highly desirable for return to service. SANRASM's mouthpiece, Courier No. 116 of 2003 p. 3, says that "Progress to date is that we have identified some of the more important missing parts on the locomotive....." Richard Niven and Nick Newport were following up on the list of parts as well as drawings from the Mitchell Library in Glasgow.”

— John Batwell

“Re. Robyn Heathfield's mention in Edition 5 of the SIA newsletter of the Zambesi Sawmills Railway findings - the prefix of 'ZR' to locomotives of 7, 8, 9 and 10 Class is incorrect. Locomotives of these Rhodesian classes were just that - acquisitions from the old Rhodesia Railways; they were never in ZR ownership, 'ZR' implying Zambia Railways. To this day, the Mulobesi branch line remains part of Zambia Railways, it was not incorporated into the concession - RSZ i.e. Railway Systems of Zambia.”

— John Batwell

Dennis Mitchell is one of our ardent SIA supporters and sent us his thoughts on locos and lines for the future.

“Dear SIA,

Hoping I'm not being too presumptuous; but I thought maybe a wish list could help.

1. Locomotives: Whilst we would all like to see our favourite locos running, the obvious locos are the fairly modern classes such as 25NC, GMA, 15F, 19D & 24. These should be fairly maintenance friendly [with the possible exception of the GMA] and crew familiarity would not be as big a problem as say something like the GB or the 10C. This is I realise, basically what is already running at REEFSTEAMERS F.O.R. etc, but I mean this as only the first steps.[CRAWL BEFORE YOU WALK SYNDROME]

On the static side of course you need locos like 19 1366, a very historic locomotive indeed, but probably harder to get some parts for than a standard 19D and MR & MRS AVERAGE wouldn't be able to tell apart when hauling their train.

My personal list would have the 26, 25, one of the rotary cam locos, with preference to the 16E, GL, 3454, 772, 3300, 2166, a 3BR, an 11 & an S1 [Oh, to see one on the shunt at GERMISTON again!!] and I reckon in time some of these will be restored.

Some discussion over locomotives such as 3511, will have to be had; on the positive side, it is unique now, therefore has tremendous railfan pulling power, it also has the capability to travel tremendous distances without taking water - which will become handy as water supplies become rarer BUT it is a maintenance heavy loco also requiring specialist fitters, boilermakers & loco crews. From what news we receive over here the 2' gauge seems in good hands locomotive wise.

2. Lines: Well this is a real bone of contention, every one has their favourite[s].

If your locomotives are still overhauled at BLOEMFONTEIN, then I can see a few possibilities.

Running in trials, [is it still possible and/or safe to run to THABA NCHU?] a recreation of the old locals would be great! Also loco could spend some time working between Ficksburg and Bethlehem before returning to WITWATERSRAND for tourist duties.

Other lines that I think were absolute gems; BARKLEY EAST if you run between say LADY GREY & TIERKRANS, what a great almost unique line.

Knysna what is happening to this line? Have they been able to fix the fault? It was/is an absolute gem.

Maclea Brilliant line but too long for every day tourist operation. BREYTEN -LOTHAIR? Cullinan if possible, with a 15CA what a trip on the Saturday local!

SIR LOWRYS PASS NYLSTROOM-VAALWATER

Probably the best way for S.I.A. to run is as provinces/states, for local running with a few 'safaris' for the world railfans. I think the bulk of your traffic will be locals and not necessarily railfans. I am not up to date with which branches are still open, this is just my recollections.

As always best wishes and HAPPY STEAMING!!!”

— Dennis Mitchell

Upcoming Events

REEFSTEAMERS CHERRY FESTIVAL SPECIAL 20-22 NOVEMBER 2008

Johannesburg to Ficksburg and return.

Reefsteamers will be running a special train from Johannesburg (Boksburg East) to Ficksburg and return for the annual Cherry Festival in November.

The train is planned to have steam haulage from Bethlehem to Ficksburg and return using David Shepherd's Class 15F 3052 "Avril". David Shepherd and his wife are expected to travel on the train.

The train will be using the Shongololo Express coaching stock which can accommodate 90 passengers.

Ticket prices are as follows:

Standard coupes and compartments: R2000.00 per person sharing. (one per coupe & two per compartment)

Deluxe compartments: (on-suite shower & toilet) R2500.00 per person sharing.

Bookings can be done through Les Smith at Reefsteamers:

Tel:011 956 6409 Fax: 086 502 7780 E-mail bookings@reefsteamers.co.za

The train will be brought into Boksburg East station at 17H00 on Thursday the 20th of November 2008. Passengers can then board at their leisure until 19H00.

Safe parking will be provided for those passengers leaving their cars at Boksburg East station.

The bar will be open for business on the evening of the of the 20th for those thirsty travellers who wish to partake of the fruit of the vine.

Supper will be available on the train that evening at the passenger's own cost. Pre-bookings for this meal are essential (bookings to (011) 956-6409)

Bedding is supplied.

The train will depart at 03H00 on Friday morning the 21st of November 2008.

Breakfast and lunch will be served on the train on Friday the 21st of November 2008, the cost thereof which is included in the price.

The train will arrive at Ficksburg station at approximately 18H30 on Friday evening the 21st.

Supper/dinner will not be provided on the Friday evening. Passengers can arrange for their own meal at the festival show grounds or at any restaurant in Ficksburg town itself.

Breakfast will be served on the train on Saturday morning the 22nd of November 2008. The cost of this meal is also included in the price.

Passengers are then free to spend the rest of the day at their leisure, either at the festival, or on a self conducted walking tour of Ficksburg town itself.

Lunch and dinner on Saturday the 22nd is for the passenger's own account, and can be had at the festival itself, or in the town.

The train will then depart on it's return journey to Boksburg East at 03H00.

Brunch will be served on Sunday the 23rd, the cost of which is included in the price. The train will arrive at Boksburg East on the Sunday at approximately 17H00.

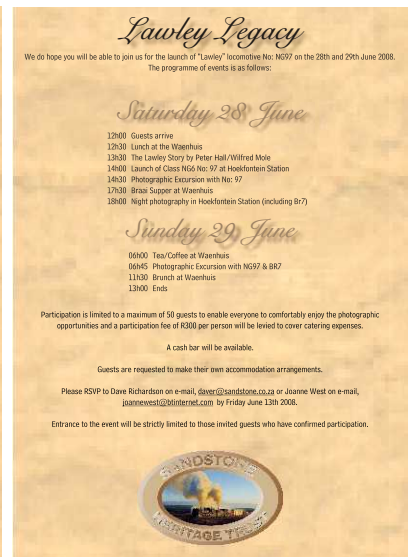
LAWLEY LEGACY INVITATION

You are cordially invited to join the Sandstone Heritage Trust on Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th June 2008 for the unveiling of 1895 built Brush F4 Class 4-4-0 "Lawley" SAR No: NG97 at Sandstone Estates ...

Click on the images to view PDF from Sandstone's website.



The image shows the cover and first few pages of a PDF invitation titled "Lawley Legacy". The cover features a photograph of the locomotive and the text "Lawley Legacy". The first page contains a detailed history of the locomotive, starting with its construction in 1892 and its service on the Beira Railway. It mentions that the locomotive was built by the Brush Works in Loughborough, England, and was the first of its class to be built in South Africa. The second page continues the history, mentioning its service on the Beira Railway and its eventual transfer to the Sandstone Heritage Trust. The third page is titled "Invitation" and contains the details of the event, including the date, time, and location. It also mentions that the locomotive will be running on special photographic excursions and that there will be a cash bar available.



The image shows the continuation of the "Lawley Legacy" PDF invitation. It includes a list of events for Saturday 28th June and Sunday 29th June. The Saturday events include a tea/coffee at 12:00, a lunch at 13:00, a launch of the locomotive at 14:00, a photographic excursion at 14:30, a braai supper at 17:30, and a night photography session at 19:00. The Sunday events include a tea/coffee at 09:00, a photographic excursion at 09:45, a braai at 11:30, and the end of the event at 13:00. The PDF also includes a participation fee of R300 per person and a cash bar. It requests that guests make their own accommodation arrangements and RSVP to Dave Richardson or Joanne West by Friday June 13th 2008. The PDF is signed by the Sandstone Heritage Trust.

REEFSTEAMERS DEPOT REPORT

Reefsteamers have been busy tidying up their depot and brought their steam crane into action, albeit via compressed air. Check it out.

<http://www.reefsteamers.co.za/content/view/143/81/>

UMGENI STEAM RAILWAY REPORT ON 1486

Umgeni Steam Railway have been making good progress on the restoration of Class 3BR No: 1486 as well as other locos and rolling stock. Andy Anderson reports ...

“Good day all,

At last some good news. After months of toiling by so few to replace all the missing / stolen pipe work the locomotive department has achieved their goal of getting 3 BR 1486 (1912 North British Loco Works) back close to steaming. On Saturday 10 May 2008 1486 received her 36 months boiler certificate. Well done to Simon and his small band of helpers.

And a welcome to "sledge" Ronald who recently joined the loco department. We hope you stay for many years to come!

Note boiler dome cover suspended from chain block (It's all that much easier at Inchanga - Thanks Marc duys it all!) Also check out the new buffer beam No. plates on 1486! - made by Simon Anderson.

The 3 BR is now fitted with (as is 19D 2685) a char scourer to the smoke box. This apparatus keeps the smoke box tube plate clear from residue char build up that results in tube plate erosion when it becomes wet when the locos stand between operational trips.

3BR 1486 is due to be steam tested on Friday 23 May 2008 with a test run to Kloof and Pinetown on Saturday 24 May 2008.

Clem's band of coaching men toil on, on suburban coach 10020, replacing rotten cladding and renewing steps, windows and top lights. 10020 should be available for service by end June.

There are also now new concrete bases set on the 2nd line in the coach yard where coaches and loco tenders can now be jacked up for bogie inspections and roadworthy certification.

14R 1576 is temporarily staged at Kloof and 12R 1505 has moved all the way to the Inchanga Nursery. The last time this loco was used on the Strelitzia trains down the south coast she was bedevilled with hot box problems. That was some 15 years ago. Since then the loco has stood at Pinetown depot without turning a wheel. After proper preparation of the axle boxes this loco moved from Pinetown to Inchanga with no sign of heated axle boxes!

NGR Dubs A No. 88 was also successfully moved to Inchanga, albeit, she was a little more stubborn in that one of her driving wheel axle boxes started to run hot, but with due care, Simon nursed her to Inchanga where she arrived 2.5 hrs later with a very much cooled down axle box!

That's all for now.

Brgds

Andy Anderson
Umgeni Steam Railway”



FOTR REPORT

FOTR have been making good progress with returning 3117 to steam. Nathan Berelowitz sent us these images ...



Websites Around the World

Marc Andre Dubout sent us this link to this French narrow gauge railway site:

"# 128 of La Voie Des Chanteraines is available on <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/cf-chanteraines/> then clic on the logo "La Voie Des Chanteraines".

Our Internet site offers a German version.

Have a good time.

Marc André Dubout

Technical Manager

Chemin de fer des Chanteraines

<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/cf-chanteraines/>"

Jonathan Flood has instituted a Yahoo group for NG15 locomotives.

"Dear Sirs,

I apologise if you have received a similar message before, however I hope you will understand that I am just trying to ensure that the information below is communicated to as many organisations and individuals who have associations / interests in NG15 2-8-2 locomotives. Obviously the Sandstone Heritage Trust now has three of these locomotives and I am keen for the owner(s) or custodian(s) of these locomotives to be aware of and hopefully join the recently launched Yahoo! Discussion Group on the web.

Its aims are as follows:

A Group for Owners and all those interested in all aspects of the twenty one NG15 2-8-2 2'0" gauge locomotives built between 1931 & 1958.

A Group interested in documenting all surviving NG15 locomotives both in the UK and abroad and championing their continued survival, restoration, maintenance and use.

A Group that will be a forum for communicating with owners to arrange group visits to view and where possible ride behind surviving locomotives.

A Group to assist in raising the awareness within the railway preservation world, of these locomotives.

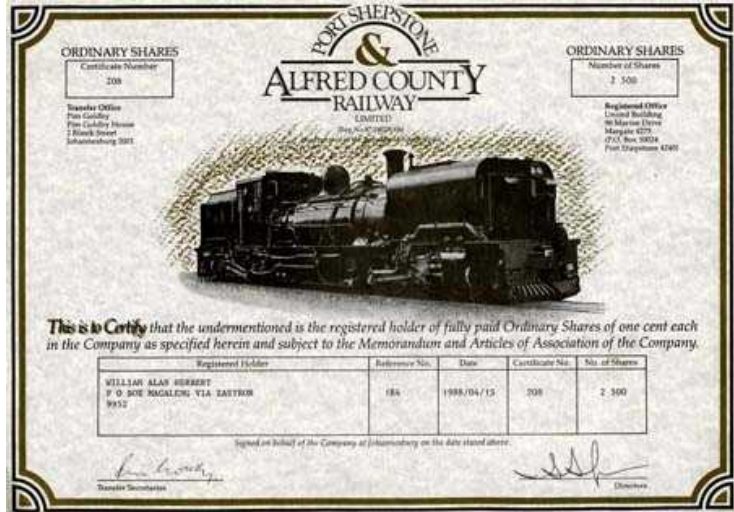
A Group that will provide updates on the progress of any NG15s which are currently being restored.

The group can be found at <http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/NG15-GROUP/>

Many thanks

Regards
Jonathan Flood
Owner & Moderator of NG15 2-8-2 Locomotives Group"

Blasts from the Past



Now a memory but in 1987 rail enthusiasts invested in the new Alfred County Railway and received a share certificate like this one.
(Courtesy of W Herbert)



In Rhodesia Railways service 36 years ago - English Electric DE2s 1234/28 in their third livery seen in tandem on the Umtali-Salisbury line, 1972. Loco 1207 is now in Sandstone's collection. (Photo: G. Cooke)



In the good old days we see ex ZASM no 61 (top) and an ex works 19D No: 3324 at Germiston

Visit our Founding Members

