



WELCOME to the September newsletter

Membership growth has slowed down somewhat but this is to be expected. What is slightly more disturbing is the lack of interaction with our members, many of whom may have felt that SIA has run its course.

In this newsletter we will try to demonstrate that we remain a very formidable force simply because of the large number of members that we have from so many different countries, and the fact that the concept of action and the fact that we as a group know how to make things happen unsettles those who regard apathy as their stock in trade. We were always mandated to make a difference and if stirring the pot is one of the ways to do that we will act accordingly.

There are some interesting developments taking place this month, many of which are quite positive, and to those who have been involved in the politics of Rail Heritage for some time it is possible that rather like the global economy we are beginning to see some green shoots.

This Month's Edition

- Editorial
- Millsite - the blame game
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- Kitson and other Eskom locomotives in preservation
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MILLSITE - THE BLAME GAME

Everything has gone back to zero due to a major management shake-up at Transnet. There is a new boss in charge of Transnet Heritage by the name of Cynthia Mgijima. We have not had any direct contact with her but we have laid out our stall as it were. We are waiting for a reaction.

The position taken by HRASA is that they have never understood why the Millsite debacle developed. It developed because a plan of action was put forward by Steam in Action which dealt with the practical realities of getting access to the locos and actually taking them away from the site. The necessary authority and the tricky legal issue of how a private sector organisation takes possession of state assets was simply ignored. In mitigation of SIA's position we attach some of the documentation which will clearly indicate that it is disingenuous of HRASA to say that they do not know why nothing actually happened. Both HRASA and Transnet continue to hold the keys for the release of these locomotives and none of the practical conditions regarding legal ownership, legal transfer of the assets, access etc. have changed at all. Steam in Action invites them to sit down and take a hard practical look at the substantial correspondence that was directed to them by SIA. All the answers to all the questions they ask are contained in those documents.

There is no need for anyone to be confused over Millsite. Here are a few key documents from the one sided "exchange" with HRASA and Transnet.

Sent: 17 March 2009 04:58 PM

To: 'Chris Janisch'

Subject: Millsite as discussed - Confidential

Importance: High

Dear Chris,

Further to our telephonic discussion and your questions regarding our views on Millsite I could write a book on this and send you literally dozens and dozens of e-mails on Millsite but here are some of the issues.

1. Legal Documentation.

a) We emphasised on many occasions to HRASA that it was imperative that we received direct authority from Transnet to be able to move any items from Transnet property but we were continually told that a letter from HRASA would suffice. It does not. For example Sandstone won a tender in PE recently and we enquired as to whether SIA could move the NG items allocated to Sandstone ex Humewood Road and Tim Fox said that unless we were in possession of a letter from Transnet he would not load Transnet property.

This request was made from experience. On the number of occasions that we have bid for Transnet assets and where we have been awarded items off these tenders we have always been told that nothing can be touched unless there is a letter of authority from Transnet. In the

past when we requested a lend/lease from Transnet we were always given written authority, which is the only thing the dept/division would accept.

Nothing has been forthcoming.

There was also the issue regarding the Sandstone lend/lease documents currently in place with Transnet. We were told by HRASA that these would be replaced by HRASA lend/leases. Bruce Brinkman has gone on record as saying that HRASA would confiscate all lend leases. As far as we are concerned these are legally binding agreements despite what HRASA says. We checked this with Susie Mabie who told us that Transnet would honour their agreements. So where was HRASA coming from? We question whether they were acting in good faith as it did not appear that HRASA and Transnet were on the same page, hence our question regarding the legalities, terms and conditions.

b) You will understand that the costs involved in moving the locomotives from Millsite would have run into many hundreds of thousands of Rands and if we had embarked on any restoration once they were in our possession we would be incurring further costs. We asked HRASA what the terms and conditions of the lend lease would be but although we receive what looked like a copy of the Transnet lend lease document we did not get answers to many questions like, what would happen if one day HRASA decided for one or other reason that they wanted the locomotives back. How would we deal with the investments made in the locomotives?

2. Logistic Support.

Apparently some arrangements were made for Transnet to assist with moving the locomotives at Millsite. We were never informed what this assistance would be despite asking the same question many times. These locomotives will take a lot of time to move and the majority, if

not nearly all of them, have no bearings. We asked HRASA to see if Transnet could assist with these and we were told that they would not which would have made moving them even more difficult. We also asked HRASA to see if a diesel could be made available by Transnet and received no reply.

3. The time frame to move the locomotives given to SIA by HRASA would have been impossible to meet and in any case while we were waiting for answers the time given to move them had already expired.

4. A lot of people were ready to give up their time as volunteers to and many people donated funds. They all eventually became disillusioned and demotivated by the whole thing. You must remember that they were all kept informed and are all aware of our inability to get answers.

Susie Mabie has been copied on the many, many, many of the important e-mails so she should be in the picture.

You may want to impress on Susie that Transnet should recognise what a powerful body SIA is. Transnet do not recognise SIA but if they did they would be dealing with an organisation which is capable of getting things done. Should they do so they will be working with organisations like FoTR, Reefsteamers, Sandstone and almost more than 800 members both local and international who all have the means and commitment.

I hope above helps.

Thanks and Regards,
Michael C. Myers

Millsite continued

We understand that HRASA is engaged in discussions with Transnet on this subject. However, we are not privy to what is actually being discussed. It is however appropriate that we maintain our focus on the current status of what is there. There is also some question mark over what is meant by 'donated to HRASA' so we have written to HRASA to query that.

In order to keep SIA members up to date this is the current status of the locomotives at Millsite.

We would like to thank SIA member Dick Manton for providing this updated schedule of information.

From: Dickmanton1@aol.com [mailto:Dickmanton1@aol.com]
Sent: 08 September 2009 18:34
To: mikem@sandstone.co.za
Cc: jmiddleton1@ifc.org; joannewest@btinternet.com
Subject: Re: Millsite Locomotives

Dear Mike,

As requested I am attaching a list of locos at Millsite with detail on why certain locos are historically important, being set aside for preservation in most cases many years ago.

I have taken as the starting point the list of locos at Millsite created by Les Smith back in April this year, amended a couple of incorrect loco numbers and added some detail on their historical value where relevant. I do not know if there has been any further cutting of locos at Millsite since April?

There are basically three categories of locos at Millsite;

1. The 10 locos on my original red line list which really should be saved as they are unique and historically important in the context of South African Steam Locomotive development. To these I have added E1 the first Electric Locomotive in South Africa.

These 11 locos are highlighted in red on the list and I have added brief remarks as to their historical relevance. I doubt that any more than one or two of these (e.g. the 12A which was partly restored in 1990) will ever be more than static exhibits due to the likely cost of restoration from stripped condition and limited suitability for hauling clubs normal trains. One of these locos, the 6A 462, hauled Cecil Rhodes train and was I think requested by Kimberley Museum during SIA discussions last year,

2. An expanded list of 29 locos (including 1 steam crane) which were identified by Mark Robinson and Dave Richardson last year as worth saving in the context of the original SIA Millsite campaign. It is these 29 locos which were donated to HRASA last year subject to their removal from site (but subsequently rescinded?).

The expanded list includes all of the 11 red line locos but adds some other older locos together with a number of 15CA and 15F locos which I presume Reefsteamers felt could be candidates for restoration to working order for their regular trains and/or useful for spare parts. FOTR also added a couple of locos (S2, 15CB) which they would like to see at Capital Park.

The additional locos which were added generally duplicate locos



already saved elsewhere, although where these are at SANRASM (e.g. the large GM Garratt and 14CRB) there must be some doubt as to just how safe they really are. I have not provided any more historical detail on these locos but could do so if required.

3. The remaining 33 locos which include a large number of 15CA and 15F locos ex-hire contracts together with others considered less historically significant or duplicated elsewhere.

Mike - hopefully this should give you a feel for what is important at Millsite. My own view is that we should try and save the 11 red line locos as static exhibits for the time being, plus as many spare parts as can be rescued from the others. If Reefsteamers feel there are one or two 15F/15CA's which are suitable restoration candidates for them then this could be handled separately.

I do have some sympathy with the view from Chris Janisch that Millsite is somewhat of a distraction given the other threats to the heritage scene at present. In my view there is a danger that if we try and save too many wrecks from Millsite there will not be the money, time or manpower to ensure the safety of other red line locos (and other THF locos in working or near working condition) at Bloemfontein, Voorbaai, George Museum (there are complete working locos in the museum currently which should not be forgotten) and Cape Town.

I hope this is what you were looking for,

Kind Regards,
Dick Manton

LOCOMOTIVES CURRENTLY FOUND AT THE 15M SHOP AREA

LOCO NUMBER	TYPE	Donated to HRASA		ON DICK MANTON RED LINE LIST	REMARKS
		YES	NO		
2913	15F	X			Reboilered 1978
2934	15F	X			
2936	15F	X			No Cab
(was 2919)					
2041	15CA	X			
2902	15F	X			BELONGS TO SANRASM
2929	15F	X			
2816	15CA	X			
(was 2048)					
2825	15CA	X			
(was 2525)					
2040	15CA	X			
2077	15CA	X			
3098	15F	X			Tender Marked "TO SAFC?"
2833	15CA	X			
2908	15F	X			
2111	12A	X		X	One of only 2 original 12A built BP 1921 - Partly Overhauled Bloemfontein 1990
2803	15CA	X			
2853	15CA	X			
2039	15CA	X			
3075	15F	X			
1488	3BR	X			PRIVATELY OWNED
1771	14CRB	X			BELONGS TO SANRAM (Historically important class - we need to ensure 1771 or 2010 plinthed at Ashton is saved)

LOCOMOTIVES KEPT ON THE ASH PIT LINE

2260	GE	X	X	Only surviving GE Garratt – built BP 1924
2292	GM	X	?	Historically important Garratt class but others survive at SANRASM and Witbank Shed.
776	10C	X		



Class 15CA 2856, Eershowoond 1967
Photo: The late and unforgettable Dusty Durrant.

LOCOMOTIVES KEPT IN THE COMPOUND AREA

2940	15F		X	
3765 (was 3764)	S2	X		Marked "FOTR"
685	19A	X		
3079	15F		X	
840	16CR	X		
772/776	10C	X		X Keep Best Loco of the 2. Only surviving ex CSAR 10C pacifics – built NB 1910
1366	19	X		X First loco of eventually numerous 19 th Class - built 1928
3645	24	X		
360	S		X	
1247	1	X		
794	16R	X		
3103	15F		X	
2836	15CA		X	
2820	15CA		X	
3001	15F		X	
50	STEAM CRANE	X		Reserved for REEFSTEAMERS
2540	19D	X		
2199	GCA	X		X One of 3 remaining GCA Garratts - built Krupp 1927 - set aside for national collection in 1970's
1791	15A	X		X One of only 2 15A's in original condition - built NB 1915 – formally Prestige Loco at Capital Park
1733	14R		X	
793	WOODEN BALCONY COACH			Poor Condition
1820	15AR		X	
1197	8DW		X	
2060	15CB	X		Marked "FOTR"
103	A	X		
E219	4E		X	
781	5R	X		X Unique 5R pacific built VF 1912 – must be saved at all costs!
E511	ES		X	
E1	1E	X		X **First Electric Loco in South Africa**
462	6A	X		X Ex-GCR 6A – built Dubs & Co 1897 and used to haul Cecil Rhodes train – promised to Kimberley museum?
723	5B	X		X Unique ex-GCR 5B express passenger pacific built BP 1904 – must be saved at all costs!
1211	8D		X	
1555	4AR	X		X Best of 2 surviving 4AR built NB 1913
1979	15BR	X		
375	S1		X	
1474	3R	X		
4022	GEA		X	STORED NEXT TO THE COAL STAGE
870	16DA	X		
3451	25	X		
2077	15CA		X	Last Baldwin built 15CA in existence
totals	62	29	33	11



150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RAILWAYS

John Middleton, who is one of the doyens of Steam Preservation in Southern Africa and who is now resident in USA, has sent us a short summary of the significance of this forthcoming milestone. To place John's comment in perspective we have detailed below a summary which was published in the book 'A symphony of Power – The Eskom story' which was published in 2000. This extract recognizes the significance of railways and provides an excellent short summary of what South Africa's Rail achievements really were:

The SA 150

The attainment of 150 years of railway operation has traditionally been the cause of great celebration for many Countries. Such an anniversary reminds the present generation of the changes in the way we live that have taken place and which have been the catalyst for development. Reaching the 150 year mark is therefore an excellent reason for exhibitions and parades to showcase both the historical face of the railways as well as the modern face of the industry. In South Africa, the present day railway system has much to be proud of from heavy duty ore and coal lines to the Gautrain project to luxury operations such as the Blue Train and Rovos Rail. The local railway industry is strong as it includes rolling stock manufacturers, engineering companies, suppliers and service providers.

The first railways in South Africa in 1860 (Cape Town) and 1861 (Durban) were built to the European standard gauge of 4'8½", however these lines were converted to 3'6" gauge by the 1880's as the narrower gauge made expanding into the interior of the country cheaper. To drive the new-found industrial wealth of the late 19th Century (diamonds in Kimberley, gold in Johannesburg, coal), transport was paramount and railway development proceeded apace, albeit with markedly different strategies in the different provinces. The provincial systems were amalgamated in 1910 on the creation of the Union of South Africa and became the South African Railways & Harbours which ultimately became the Transnet of the 21st century. From 1910 railway development went from strength to strength to develop into the biggest and most technically advanced

narrow gauge railway system in the world. In many respects the 3'6" gauge railways are anything but "narrow", with strings of records which included the world's heaviest train (over 71,200 tons – but since eclipsed in Australia), and the world's narrow gauge speed record (153 MPH). 22,000 ton trains of coal and 35,000 ton trains of iron-ore are the normal loads on the Richards Bay and Sishen-Saldanha lines respectively. Steam development continued later than in many countries with Wardale's superb 26 class Red Devil which could develop over 4400 ihp appearing as late as 1980 although unfortunately it was not developed further.

Today, South Africa has the largest rail system in Africa with over 22000 route kilometres of 3'6" (1067 mm) gauge plus one surviving 2'0" gauge (610 mm) line. The rail system connects with those of Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe and there is considerable through traffic. Electrification started in 1923 and today most of the main lines are electrified. Steam traction officially ended on the main line in 1992 but has continued with tourist charters and operations such as the Outeniqua Choo-Choo out of George. Some steam saw commercial industrial service into the 21st century although as in other countries, industrial steam in South Africa was already very much in its twilight years with only one steam operated system lasting in the year 2009.

Railways – the backbone of a nation

South Africa is a large country, with an area roughly equal to that of Great Britain, France, the Low Countries and Germany combined. It has distinct nodes or hubs where development has advanced rapidly, separated by large stretches of almost empty, arid landscape. The main economic hub developed naturally around Johannesburg and the gold-mines on the Rand. The City of Cape Town, an important port, is 1 400 km away to the south-west and the Great North Road stretches another 500 km north to the border with present-day Zimbabwe. The harbour City of Durban, on the east coast of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal), and its surrounding area up to Pietermaritzburg form a third node. The ports of Port Elizabeth and East London on the Cape south coast form other, albeit smaller, growth points followed by Bloemfontein and Kimberley. Bordering South Africa, but considerable distances away, were important but smaller towns like Lourenço Marques (now Maputo), Windhoek, Bulawayo and Salisbury (Harare) and perhaps half-a-dozen even smaller centres.

The only practicable way to link these far-flung centres together was by means of a good railway infrastructure. Linked to the fact that most of the resources were inland and the export harbours on the coast, a radial system emanating from the resource-rich interior to the large ports were a common feature early on in the development of South Africa.

The first railways in South Africa came into operation in Durban in 1860 and in Cape Town in 1862 through private companies. They were later taken over by the then colonial governments in the Cape and Natal. With the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley, the railway system in the Cape was first extended from the harbours in Port Elizabeth and East London to the interior. The longer railway line from Cape Town reached Kimberley in 1885.

When hard coal was discovered at Newcastle in Natal [named after its British equivalent] in 1883, the Natal line from Durban through Pietermaritzburg was rapidly extended into the interior, eventually linking up with the Rand near the town of Heidelberg in the Transvaal.

The third prompt for the growth of the railways was the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886. This led to further extensions of the Cape railway system through the Orange Free State, crossing the Vaal River border into the Transvaal near Vereeniging in 1892 and linking up with the NZASM system there. Paul Kruger's dream of a railway line to the east, escaping British encirclement, became a reality in 1895. Isaac Lewis and Sammy Marks were able to exploit both these lines for their growing coal interest. This started the close link that has existed for many years between railways and coal.

When hostilities ceased after the Anglo-Boer War, the railway systems of the Free State and the Transvaal were merged into a single Central South African Railways (CSAR), and with the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, the Cape and Natal systems were merged with the CSAR to become the South African Railways (SAR). In 1916, the various Harbour Boards were incorporated into the SAR, which then became the South African Railways and Harbours (SAR&H). By this time, the SAR&H was by far the largest single organisation in South Africa, operating some 12 000 km of railways.

REGISTRATION FOR MEGA POWER 2010 GOING WELL

SIA recently sent out notification covering the Narrow Gauge Gala and Steam Festival being held at Sandstone Estates in the Eastern Free State between 19th and 25th April 2010.

Registrations are going well. Many of the people who have registered have indicated that they would like a driver training experience and special arrangements are being made to accommodate them. It has been decided that a limit of 400 VIP's should be placed on the number of guests registering for the event and it is expected that this target will be reached sometime during October. If you have not registered and if you are thinking of coming then it is probably a good idea to put your name down without delay.

A number of detailed event bulletins will be published and these will be sent to people who have registered.

Quite a number of participants have suggested that since nothing appears to be planned cover the celebration of 150 years of Railways in South Africa that Mega Power 2010 should embrace this as a concept. This has been well received here in South Africa and it is likely that the event will be upgraded to incorporate this particular celebration.

To register click here: http://www.sandstone-estates.com/interim/mega_power_2010/index.html.

SA TO ATTEND INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY HERITAGE CONFERENCE

When David Morgan, Chairman of the Heritage Railway Association of Britain and Ireland and President of the European Federation of Museum & Tourist Railways, came to South Africa to attend the Sandstone Estates Maluti Magic event in February this year he addressed enthusiasts and urged them to become much more aware and to begin to participate more actively in the international Rail Preservation scene. An invitation was extended to Sandstone Estates to send a delegate. However it was felt that since Sandstone was not a major player in Railway Preservation in South Africa and since it was confined to a railway on an agricultural enterprise it was far better if someone at a much higher level could be nominated to attend. The matter was then put to HRASA who agreed that the correct delegate was Dudley Smith, the Corporate & Social Development Manager at Ingwe Municipality. Members are familiar with Dudley as a result of a recent announcement that was put out on his behalf through SIA calling for expressions of interest in an exciting steam tourist railway programme that he has developed in Creighton in Natal.

It would appear that HRASA was not able to fund Dudley's visit and SIA have therefore volunteered to assist in this regard. At the time of going to press 90% of the money necessary for Dudley to proceed to Brisbane has been raised as a result of the SIA initiatives and therefore we can accept that he will be on his way shortly.

We wish Dudley well as we hope that he will come back with many insights and observations as to the strategic direction in which Railway Preservation might move. Dudley has been conspicuously successful in dealing with government at various levels and has raised considerable funding for Rail Tourism in Natal.

Mike Myers from SIA is to be complimented on coordinating a generous donation of R20,000 towards this trip by Transnet. SIA would particularly like to express their appreciation to Transnet for this donation. May it herald a new era of cooperation between the public and private sector regarding the future of our Rail Tourism and Rail Preservation activities in Southern Africa.

PROBLEMS WITH MARIA RAMOS' SUCCESSOR

SIA has had contact with Siyabonga Gama, the Chief Executive of Transnet Freight Rail. Furthermore HRASA, through one of its members Reefsteamers, recently held a high level meeting with the Chief Executive of Transnet Freight Rail to try and clarify questions of access to lines etc.

Unfortunately shortly after that the Chief Executive was suspended. There are many news articles on the subject for those SIA members who are interested but here is one link that provides some information on the current status:

<http://www.busrep.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=552&fArticleId=5168718>.

There have been some changes at Transnet. The Public Enterprises Minister (Barbara Hogan) has appointed Prof Geoff Everingham as Acting Chairman of Transnet.



*Class GM 2294 at Groot Marico 1967
Photo: The late and unforgettable Dusty Durrant.*

REGIONAL NEWS

Reefsteamers

Reefsteamers now produce their own newsletter entitled 'Reefsteamers Waybill'. See September 2009 copy attached.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/pdf/FOTR_newsletter_Sep_2009.pdf

Friends of the Rail

Once again Friends of the Rail produce their own newsletter, a copy of which is attached.

http://www.steam-in-action.com/pdf/RS_Waybill_Sep_2009.pdf

Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe



Choo-Tjoe News: Edition 5 – 25 September 2009

Photo courtesy of Andries Keyser

STILL WAITING FOR TRANSNET ...

In August, Transnet made assurances that they would have the Choo-Tjoe up and running by the 1st of October. With that deadline fast approaching, we got in touch with them, and after apologising, they told us that there had been a further delay, and that the Choo-Tjoe will now be relaunched in mid-October.

We are anxiously awaiting the moment, and Minister Winde will travel to the Garden Route to see our icon in action again.

Ever since Minister Winde called on the public to come forward with suggestions on how to save the Choo-Tjoe, we have heard stories of volunteers' efforts to restore the Rheilffordd Ffestiniog Railway in Wales. We found these anecdotes of collaboration and willpower particularly inspiring, and in November this year, Minister Winde will travel to Britain to see this beauty first hand, and hear about how its restoration was completed so successfully.

Minister Winde will also meet with Sir William McAlpine, best known for his work with the Flying Scotsman. From both visits, Minister Winde hopes to gain insight into the restoration and operation of steam locomotives like our own Choo-Tjoe, and will travel back to the Western Cape to inform his team about his discoveries.

As soon as we have a date for the expressions of interest meeting, we will communicate that to you. In the meantime, it would be great to see you at the re-launch of the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe in mid-October (we will send you an e-mail once the official date has been communicated to us by Transnet).

Please call at 021 483 3531, or e-mail , to give your input on how we can save the train.

May we remind SIA members that they can communicate directly with HRASA or with the individual clubs in SA, many of whom do an excellent job. For ease of reference details are as follows:

www.friendsoftherail.com
www.apple-express.co.za
www.atlanticrail.co.za
s2000@vodamail.co.za (Beaconsfield Railway)

www.reefsteamers.co.za
www.futurenet.co.za/pcngr/
www.elginvalley.co.za

KITSON AND OTHER ESKOM LOCOMOTIVES IN PRESERVATION

SIA has been receiving quite a lot of correspondence from overseas enthusiasts questioning the plight of the Kitson and a number of other historically significant locomotives at SANRASM. Kitson is a national monument.

The following letter was addressed to the person whose name was provided on the Eskom web site:

From: Mike Myers [mailto:mikem@sandstone.co.za]
Sent: 03 September 2009 12:52 PM
To: 'jenny.kolb@eskom.co.za'
Subject: FW: ESKOM Heritage locomotives
Importance: High

Dear Jenny,

I am writing to you on behalf of Steam in Action, a lobby group which seeks to preserve South Africa's Steam Heritage. We have nearly 850 members worldwide of which the demographics are approximately 50% Southern Africa and the balance from the United States, Switzerland, Germany, Australia, Japan, Canada and many other countries.

We are gravely concerned at the plight of one of South Africa's rarest and most iconic locomotives, namely Kitson. In fact, the same applies to all the Eskom locomotives that really were at the very apex of South Africa's Steam Heritage.

We have looked at your excellent web site and in particular at the section under Kitson. The history is extremely well known internationally, however, the statements made on your web site are less than accurate. For example, Kitson has been virtually abandoned and apart from some sporadic attention has not been in use for a considerable amount of time. There is no excuse for this because the locomotive was in excellent condition when it was donated and it is not particularly difficult to maintain it in that condition. Your web site for example states that "Kitty" is still in first class condition and that it is still possible to ride on the locomotive which would mean that it is still possible to stem the locomotive.

Eskom's credibility is being undermined by the fact that most knowledgeable people know that these statements are incorrect.

Steam in Action took the matter up with Mr. Lawrence Posniak of SANRASM. Far from being a National Railway Museum it is more like a secret society with a handful of members who do not communicate with the outside and who do not make people welcome. As a result of that access to Kitson and many other valuable iconic old locomotives is simply not possible for large numbers of international visitors.

What prompted us to write to you is the fact that a number of major steam events are taking place next year. The latest one to be announced is Mega Power 2010. To view invitation click here: http://www.steam-in-action.com/mega_power_2010/Mega_Power_2010_Invitation.pdf.

This is attracting hundreds of very specialised and very enthusiastic steam professionals from around the world and at least a dozen of them have already indicated that they would like to go and visit the museum mentioned on your web site. However, one of our representatives has just been there and it is a very unsatisfactory advertisement for South Africa and we do not know what to tell these people. Far from being received by enthusiastic volunteers, offered a cup of tea and taken on a tour, they are likely to receive something of a shock and will certainly be disappointed.

SANRASM do not appear to be too worried about the matter but Eskom's credibility is definitely being placed in jeopardy here. We would welcome a discussion on the subject with you because collectively our members who represent the major players in the Steam Preservation world in Southern Africa are in a position to assist and are in a position to ensure that an opportunity to maintain a locomotive of Kitson's integrity is not missed.

We hasten to add that it has taken us 3-years to reach the stage where we are communicating directly with Eskom. The fact is that SANRASM appears to be delusional about the current state of the assets in their possession. The attached letter and the subsequent follow up correspondence were ignored, which is discourteous in itself bearing in mind the facts and circumstances supporting the contents of the same letter.

I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,
Michael C. Myers

SIA received the following reply:

-----Original Message-----

From: Jenny Kolb [mailto:jenny.kolb@eskom.co.za]
Sent: 14 September 2009 09:24 AM
To: Mike Myers
Subject: RE: ESKOM Heritage locomotives
Importance: Low

** Low Priority **

Dear Mike

Sorry for the delay in replying as I needed to find out what the status was.

SANRASM is a heritage/museum NPO with the emphasis on building a representative collection (irrespective of condition) and bringing in the general public, particularly young people. Steam in Action is a steam enthusiast organisation.

SANRASM has had major security problems. Thus our site is now only open to the public on the first Sunday of every month, or by prior arrangement with our office.

We have had major theft problems from ALL our items and much of the theft was conducted by the security staff from reputable companies! Thus we have not replaced stolen parts but kept spares safely locked away.

At present we are not running any live steam operations pending the sorting out of our contracts with Rand Uranium. It is not that there are any problems but purely that we are at the bottom of their agenda.

If you require any further information regarding these locomotives please let me know.

Kind regards
Jenny



Kitson continued

The response did not deal comprehensively with the points raised in our letter so we then responded as follows:

From: Mike Myers [mailto:mikem@sandstone.co.za]
Sent: 15 September 2009 02:18 PM
To: jenny.kolb@eskom.co.za
Subject: FW: ESKOM Heritage locomotives

Dear Jenny,

Thank you for your response. The information you have provided is interesting.

Surely as a first step Eskom should correct the information on the Eskom website because it is misleading, particularly to overseas visitors.

I am not sure if you are planning to go to Mega Power 2010 (see the attached) but a lot of international visitors who intend to come would like to see the SANRASM collection because these are people who already understand what a representative collection of locomotives looks like.

Are you the person who we should coordinate these visits through?

Regards,
Michael C. Myers

Jenny Kolb has requested me to respond to your e-mail.

In terms of access to the SANRASM sites to view the collection:

*The Chamdor site is open to the public at all times and visitors are welcome to visit it at any time at their own risk. There are no Eskom locomotives on this site.

*The south site at Randfontein is open on the first Sunday of every month and by prearranged appointment at reasonable times.

*The northern site at Randfontein is only open by prearranged appointment and we reserve the right to request a signed indemnity.

Due to theft and sabotage we have instructed security not to allow anybody on site unless the visit has been prearranged and they have been notified.

Visits to the sites can be arranged through our Fund Raising office at 011-888-1154. At least a weeks notice would be preferred and there will be a charge.

Lawrence Posniak

These locomotives are not in a presentable state to receive overseas visitors. Bearing in mind that is 150 years of the History of Railways in South Africa next year this is not an acceptable situation, particularly for a company as large and as significant as Eskom.

SIA is committed to making progress on this issue.



Kitson at Rosherville Germiston 1975. Photo: The late Dave Parsons



Hunslet 1975. Photo: The late Dave Parsons



MEMBER'S FEEDBACK

From: Phil Mortimer [mailto:imortim1@exchange.johnshopkins.edu]
Sent: 05 September 2009 00:10
Subject: RE: THE FUTURE OF SIA.

Hmmm. Not sure what to say at present. For one, I will stick with SIA to the bitter end. However, I do detect a lessening of interest from the wider world. I suspect that this is partly due to the disappointments of the intransigence faced by SIA/SHT, etc from the "official" bodies and the ultimate inability (not for want of trying) in achieving some of the objectives of preserving the steam heritage (Millsite, etc). I'd also suggest that may be the chasm that has arisen between HRASA and the official bodies on one side and SIA on the other is being perceived by those more distant as petty infighting (irrespective of whatever is really occurring), and people are standing clear of it and waiting to see what pans out. (The whole keep your head down until the fighting stops issue). The other issue I suspect is that SIA, whilst pointing out the reality of what is occurring, the destruction of assets, the unbelievable beaurocracy and intransigence from the official bodies, is a steady drumbeat of ever increasing doom and gloom and maybe some are just getting tired of hearing bad news (and are therefore switching off).

Being so distant from the scene of events, I don't know what to suggest. Obviously, the burden of running SIA is heavy and falls mainly upon yours and the teams shoulders. If there is no response, then it would be understandable if you decided it wasn't worth the effort to keep producing the newsletter. I for one will miss it, but I can't ask people to keep soldiering on in the face of adversity when you could use your time more productively, with less hassle and aggravation to yourselves. On the other hand I think that SIA has achieved great things, the most important being to get HRASA off dead centre, and if such momentum can be sustained, I feel it should IF IT IS REASONABLE TO DO SO. But I'm sitting here in the United States, far from the scene of battle.

So, at this juncture, I'm not sure what is the best course of action or what to suggest. Unfortunately, I guess that this sort of decision comes down to those directly involved and their own decision as to whether to continue the fight or not. At the end of the day, SIA is a wonderful organization headed and consisting of dynamic people who do, rather than talk. I'm proud to be a member. As a separate entity, SHT stands as a beacon of what can be achieved with that sort of spirit. Ultimately, the path forward for SIA has to be chosen by those who head the organization (you guys), and whether they feel they can or want to maintain it.

I'm not sure if this makes any sense, but it's the best I can do at present. Let me know if you need any clarification.

Phil



There are volunteers and there are volunteers!! World famous artist David Shepherd assists Tony King of Reefsteamers with a spot of painting.

Info and photo with thanks to Lee Gates.

From: Ronald Fisher [mailto:randv.fisher@yahoo.co.uk]
Sent: 03 September 2009 23:02
Subject: Swaziland accident.

Hello,

I have just read in the August Steam in Action Newsletter about the head-on collision in Swaziland. (Page 15.)

Your correspondent gives the date as being 1976; however we were told this same story when we went there in 1972 so it had clearly already happened by then.

Best wishes,
Ron Fisher

From: Vincent Ward [mailto:vincentward@gmail.com]
Sent: 06 August 2009 07:02
Subject: SANRSM

I was wondering if you had any information of the fate of the steam locos stored at Millsite and SANRSM? I have heard that the state of steam preservation is an uphill battle at the moment.

Thanks for all your efforts in saving our heritage.
Vincent Ward



Barclay's Hunslet 1985.
Photo: The late Dave Parsons



Kitson 1975. Built in 1879, still running in 1989
Photo: The late Dave Parsons



Once again we have received a host of interesting Archive photos from Dennis Mitchell in Australia to share with members. Thanks Dennis...you are a star.

ARCHIVES

R.E.G.M. #4[1974] 4-8-2T

This is R.E.G.M. 4 at the exchange[changeover] sidings ,in november 1974. The loco had just swapped loads with 15 BR #1 which is either 1975 or 1990 depending on the time of the accident to the original 15BR, which was about that time. The tank had brought some empties for the Cooke shaft which the 15BR will take to the shaft tender first. Whilst the 15 BR s waltzed away with the loads this loco is having trouble getting the loaded train moving; but it's all downhill from here!!



This is 25NC no 3532 tripping through Modder River at the 90 k.p.h. goods limit. What a machine; on any gauge ...but 3'6"I'm dreaming!!!

Dennis Mitchell

For the record your Advisory Board members are as follows:

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 Friends of the Rail: www.friendsoftherail.com
 Sandstone Heritage Trust: www.sandstone-estates.com

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