# steam in action

south africa

EDITION 26

# KEEPING TRACKS

MARCH 2010

Membership Total as at 26th March 2010: 908.

The membership subscription web site was suspended in view of pending HRASA takeover on 12th February 2010. The original systme has been reinstated and is now live. The website address is www.steam-in-action.com

## WELCOME

**to the March newsletter**

Firstly, apologies to SIA members for the long delay in issuing a newsletter. We have been engaged in almost constant negotiations with the Heritage Rail Association of South Africa (see www.hrasa.com). The messages that we received throughout the whole of last year, and indeed even before that, were that things were changing. They did restructure their Board of Directors and we have always been complimentary about the conscientious approach being adopted by Chris Janisch - Chairman, Nerina Skuy – Secretary, and the other directors.

The major topic of discussion has been the extent to which SIA can merge with HRASA in order to give HRASA more substance and more influence. In addition SIA has strengths which HRASA does not have and these to be fair were recognized by HRASA. On the other hand HRASA is, at least as far as they are concerned, the legitimate private sector body who are entitled to talk to the Railway authorities in South Africa and who again presumably are being empowered to make a difference in trying to save what is left of South Africa's Rail Heritage.

Words received are plenty. However, the substance has been missing and the endorsement of these views by the authorities has also been missing.

SIA has adopted a very specific stance which can be summarized as follows:

A) Provide proof that you are who you say are. Give us a letter from Transnet saying that you have the authority to act in the manner that you indicate.

B) Be transparent in your dealings with the authorities. There is no point in talking to us about successful meetings if you then advise us that the content of these successful meetings is secret. There are SIA members who are also HRASA members and even those members are unable to obtain copies of key documents or acquaint themselves with the policy decisions being made behind closed doors.

C) Continuous reference is made to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which apparently has been signed between HRASA and the authorities. We have been told that under instruction from Transnet this document cannot be placed before the rail enthusiast and supporters community.

Little wonder then that we are skeptical about HRASA's intentions and likelihood of success. All it would take is a letter from Transnet saying:

*'To whom it may concern, HRASA is the body that we recognise and they have the mandate to make and implement policy decisions relative to the future of South Africa's Rail Heritage. We commend all interested parties to work with HRASA.'*

We challenge HRASA to produce such a document signed by a sufficiently senior official in Transnet to give it absolute credibility.

There is no doubt that HRASA has been timid and has been spoken down to by Transnet. They appear to have adopted an approach of quiet diplomacy. The private sector must surely realize that after 10 years of negotiating politely with an ever revolving list of officials that in fact nothing of substance has been achieved and that year in year out assets are lost.

## This Month's Edition


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- Feedback on Red Devil
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A much more robust yet dignified and absolutely consistent approach pointing out the merits of what this movement is all about would have been much more productive. The fact is that under current political circumstances as soon as one goes to a government organisation or parastatal in South Africa on the basis that "we realise we do not have any authority" one is being set up to being marginalized. There is huge moral authority behind what the Private sector is trying to achieve and there are also considerable benefits to South Africa if the many initiatives and programmes which SIA has been dealing with come to a successful conclusion.

HRASA's position is underlined by a statement made to SIA in writing by Chris Janisch, the Chairman of HRASA, recently and we quote,

***"We have no funds and so cannot be expected to take care of assets which do not even belong to us."***

If this is correct and it must be because otherwise Chris wouldn't have said it, then there is a serious problem

because the authorities have appointed an organization to do something that they don't really want to see happen anyway but now have the convenient excuse of saying they have gone through some democratic process and appointed a private sector representative organisation to 'privatise the process'. The only way that this process can ever be successfully privatised would be to give real authority to the people who can make a difference. In addition the organization needs leadership, talent, money and influence.

We specifically challenge Chris Janisch's statement that there is no money. SIA has proved conclusively that there is plenty of money - if the cause it right, if the documentation is in order, and if SIA members are convinced that things are actually going to happen. The cycle that is yet to be broken is that HRASA issues documents authorizing item to be saved and then Transnet immediately blocks the process by refusing access to the items in question. In addition no one has been dealing with the actual legality of the private sector taking over State assets. It is very apparent to us that the State would rather see these assets destroyed, cut up for scrap, or allowed to rot rather than go through the correct administrative steps to achieve an honourable objective. It is time for the preservationists to get ahead of the scrap Industry and purchase the assets.

Chris Janisch of HRASA recognises that as confirmed below.

**From:** *Chris Janisch [mailto:janisch24@gmail.com]*

**Sent:** *19 February 2010 18:58*
**Subject:** Re: *FW: FW: SIA November Newsletter-feedback*

*At the end of the day it will be up to people who put their money where their mouth is to save the remaining usable assets. This is not HRASAS's fault but the facts of the new South Africa.*

## For New members

By way of history HRASA became reaccredited by the Heritage Foundation and Transnet during 2009. Chris Janisch, who is an honourable man, asked us to please step back off and to stop putting pressure on the authorities and to leave HRASA to take care of it because they now had the ear of the officials and were going to get things done. However HRASA effectively negated SIA's ability to do things by agreeing with THF that they must not talk to SIA. That is why Millsite and many other critical issues are moribund. They have all agreed to do nothing except talk in secret and at the same time they all found it politically expedient to smother the fundraising/action arm of SA rail heritage (read SIA) The money collected from SIA Members for Millsite was returned to donors after 2 years due the fact that SIA could not get authority to move anything. We were completely blacklisted and all our correspondence, details of logistical arrangements etc was binned.

This is a good time to remember that SIA is a lobby group but we are not constituted as a business with a revenue stream and expenditure plan. However we can put pressure on officials to release locomotives to the private sector but until people actually step forward and say that they are prepared to support the initiative the momentum of the proposals collapses. The officials are convinced that the Rail Preservation sector is without substance (read money) and we need to disprove that. Even HRASA is convinced of the fact that there is no money which could evolve into a dangerous self-fulfilling prophecy if it is not corrected.

SIA is here, SIA is growing, and SIA remains committed to a merger with HRASA or anyone who can demonstrate that they have the will to salvage something from the sad national tale of neglect that has developed. We are committed to fulfilling our role as originally stated in our founding manifesto. However, we will not allow ourselves to be absorbed into this world of quiet diplomacy against the certain knowledge that it is the death knell for everything that we have tried to achieve. That is the challenge that HRASA must now face.

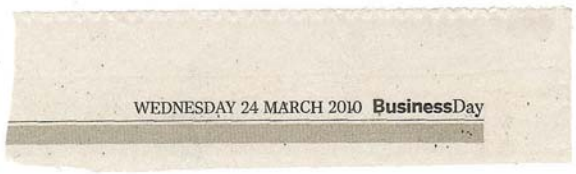
There is no lack of sympathy amongst SIA ranks for their dilemma.

A quotation is relevant here. It appeared in a letter written to The Cape Times by a senior Pathologist commenting on the parlous state of South Africa's health system, railways etc.

"Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." Martin Luther King.

It is interesting to note that when we used to engage directly with the Transnet Heritage Foundation, as we did in the case of Dudley Smith's trip to Australia, they actually responded very enthusiastically. It is a philosophical point this but basically the word that gets fed to us continuously is 'SIA is too aggressive, you upset people, so please do not do anything. Our reaction to that is you have to upset people and structures occasionally, particularly if they are guilty of neglect and are part of the Augean stable

These giant South African parastatals like Transnet and Eskom seem to be constantly reinventing themselves to no great effect. They have now gone back to the concept of courting the private sector as described below. Does this provide an opportunity for the Heritage sector to work with them? We certainly hope so but we are not going to hold our breath. Nonetheless this does provide an opportunity for us to remind them that we exist and to send copies of many private sector proposals that have been forwarded to the organisation and which by and large have been ignored in the past.


WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH 2010 BusinessDay

# Open invitation to Transnet critics

SIR — Your correspondent, C Lemkin (Transnet alarm bells, Letters, March 14) punts the same tired Cassandra warnings about Transnet's alleged failings. They are, as usual, without foundation.

What is noticeable however, are the startling similarities in both the tenor and substance of these letters to similar correspondence from stalwarts D Wolpert and D Norman.

To quote an old Private Eye running gag, we wonder if they are by any chance related?

Transnet is not perfect; it faces many challenges. Over the past few years however, it has bravely confronted these challenges and made considerable progress. In the past five years, it has invested R74bn — all of which was cost-effectively financed off our own balance sheet and some R5bn came from off-shore investors, a sign of confidence in the company's management and strategies; it is doubling to R175m the amount it invests in noble social causes via Transnet Foundation (the total spend is about R200m each year); it has paid over R5bn in taxes; it will leverage new



investment, jobs and skills transfer as it rolls out its competitive supplier development programme; and, crucially, independent research shows that Transnet's capital programme will help create over 550 000 new jobs in the rest of the economy.

Over the years, Transnet has done sterling work on promoting a culture of transparency and openness, both internally and externally. This past week, for the first time, we shared our corporate plan for the next five years with the media, enabling the public to assess our performance against targets. The company therefore welcomes the opportunity to engage in robust debate with anyone who seeks clarity on these matters.

With this in mind, I had previously extended an open invitation to our most hostile detractors. There were no takers.

Instead, we have faced a consistent barrage of carping criticisms and insults, all seemingly co-ordinated and designed to foster a corrosive and negative image. These have done great reputational damage to our company, and indeed ill-serve our country.

It is clear from the correspondence that certain individuals feel passionately about Transnet and SA. We all do. Once again therefore, I extend a warm invitation to these inveterate letter-writers to get in touch.

I would be very surprised if Messers Norman, Wolpert and Lemkin reveal themselves. For once, I would be pleasantly surprised to be proven wrong!

**John Dludlu**
Transnet spokesman

## Appeal to members

SIA has taken the initiative in responding to Mr. Dludlu. Here is our first salvo. http://www.steam-in-action.com/pdf/Business_Day_Steam_in_Action_response.pdf

We expect this document to be ignored because that is what we have consistently experienced but let's hope that Mr. Dludlu makes an exception in our case. WE EARNESTLY INVITE SIA MEMBERS TO WRITE DIRECTLY TO MR. DLUDLU. If anything in his open letter to the private sector resonates with a member please write to him. It is far more powerful if he receives a cross-section of well written, well informed rebuttals. We do not have to be critical of him; we can be constructive and say that we welcome his invitation to the private sector but we got off to a bad start so let's correct work to correct past errors and get constructive. Please mention that you are a member of SIA but otherwise deal with him on an individual basis where you urge him to respond to specifics. Things that should possibly be raised would be Millsite which was effectively blocked and shut down by Transnet as an initiative, the fate of the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe, which is again a secret scenario, the plight of locomotives throughout South Africa where any number of offers to purchase or offers to move them to places of safety have been ignored. Finally, the fact that so many good locomotives have been cut up for scrap without consultation with the private sector. We are sure there are many more.

Good luck! His e-mail address is john.dludlu@transnet.net.




*"A Painting of the Blue Train behind steam"*
*By Paul Treleven. www.paultreleven.com*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The last SIA newsletter was published 3-months ago. It is therefore appropriate that we provide a summary of what has happened and perhaps more importantly what has not happened within this sector. As always we need significant buy-in from various organizations.

## 1) Millsite.

Nothing has really changed. HRASA indicates that there are negotiations taking place behind the scenes which will resolve this issue. A pivotal point here is the question of money. There are indications that the authority might be persuaded to actually sell preservation assets in South Africa. This is in fact one of the few solutions that might bear fruit. However it will be very dependent upon the goodwill of dedicated railway and locomotive enthusiasts who feel that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to buy a rare South African locomotive. There will undoubtedly be conditions attached to the procurement of locomotives but there are many fine clubs and private collectors who can provide accommodation for these items as long as they receive financial assistance to achieve their objectives. There are some good examples of international owners who have purchased locomotives and then placed them on loan or simply in safekeeping with private sector organizations. NGG 16, No. 141 was purchased for example by Phil Mortimer Snr. (UK) and Phil Mortimer Jnr. (USA) and from the ashes of ACR, Port Shepstone. They then paid for it to be moved to the Sandstone Heritage Trust in the Eastern Free State where it is currently stored pending a restoration programme.

It is very important that if and when the authorities make a decision to dispose of these Heritage items that the international community reach for their cheque books. SIA will ensure that the transactions are entirely legitimate, legal, and that true ownership does take place. Transport is a major issue and could represent the bulk of the actual costs involved.

Because of lack of transparency we are to some extent guessing as to what is happening behind the scenes but we have a number of fairly reliable indicators that the above might come to fruition. If an SIA member is interested in purchasing a locomotive now is a good time to tell us that you are interested so that we can approach the authorities with a clear indication that there is interest, money and logistics to back-up the programme.

If there is a specific locomotive that is of interest please e-mail your requirements to joannewest@btinternet.com. We will investigate the current state of the asset and revert to you. We are expecting a change in policy which may allow these assets to be purchased outright and the sooner we notify the authorities of specific offers the better.

## 2) SANRASM.

In the case of SANRASM we continue to take the matter up with Eskom. To be fair to Eskom, more so than with other organisations, they are actually responding although they aren't saying anything specific.

Here is some background on this SIA initiative.

To refresh SIA members' memories, we have a dialogue on with Eskom regarding the parlous situation of their locomotives at SANRASM. Here is an e-mail sent 9th November last year, which summarized the position.

Sent: 09 November 2009 08:48 AM
To: Lorna Ndlela
Subject: Eskom locomotives in preservation

Dear Lorna,

We have attached pictures of Avonside leaving Millsite for SANRASM on 12 November 1991 behind 6A 454 which had been at Millsite for axle box repairs. The pictures of Hunslet and Kitty are from the day of the official handover from ESKOM to SANRASM (13/02/93).

Kitty was only to be steamed on special occasions when ESKOM was present but Hunslet saw a lot of use on SANRASM service trains. As you now know the items have been abandoned.

I also wanted to mention that there is growing local and international disquiet over this. Please refer to the SIA Newsletter for October, attached. This has led to a flood of new information, mostly bad. We do need to publish Eskom's thoughts during November. Our deadline is 25 /11 for SIA member feedback.

Lorna we appreciate the work that you are putting in to this and we look forward to your feedback. We believe that with your assistance these assets can not only be saved but can be returned to use as a positive move by both Eskom and South Africa.

Regards,
Michael C. Myers

If there are any SANRASM members who are also SIA members perhaps they could progress this matter. It provides an opportunity for Sandstone to continue to restore Narrow Gauge locomotives, it provides an opportunity to keep our Bloemfontein Works busy, and it provides an opportunity for SANRASM to prove that they are committed to Railway Preservation. There is no argument that what is left of these locomotives is beyond what even a respectable scrap dealer would be prepared to collect.











*Photographs supplied by Mike Myers*

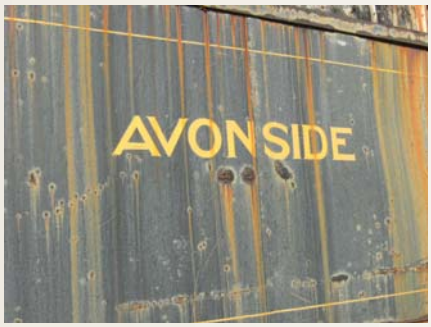
Sent: 09 March 2010 03:28 PM
To: 'Lorna Ndlela'
Subject: FW: Eskom locomotives in preservation

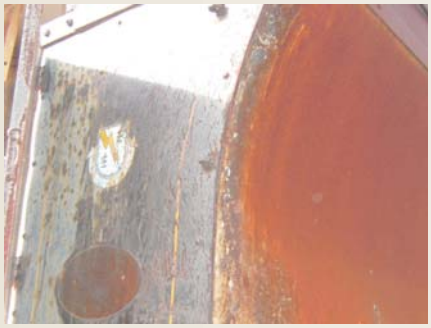
Dear Lorna,

Attached are some more photographs of the condition of your once proud locomotives. What can we tell the SIA members? My e-mail below refers. I believe you have had more than enough time to discuss this matter with SANRASM.

Kind regards,
Michael C. Myers







***SIA Comment: Since this photo was taken an SIA member has been to inspect it. The loco still looks as bad if not worse now since it's been standing outside for many years. It has absolutely no parts on it and has been badly stripped.***

We reminded Eskom about this matter on 9th March and we received the following response:

-----Original Message-----
From: Lorna Ndlela [mailto:Lorna.Ndlela@eskom.co.za]
Sent: 25 March 2010 02:28 PM
Subject: Re: FW: Eskom locomotives in preservation

Dear Mike,

Thank you for the information. We are busy investigating the matter and it is receiving our attention.

Lorna Ndlela
Eskom Documentation and Information Centre Manager

It is time for individual SIA members to express their own particular views directly to Eskom. In addition inexplicably SANRASM (read Lawrence Posniak) refuses to discuss the matter or to acknowledge correspondence. This clearly indicates that he has nothing to say but together with his colleagues he is prepared to allow some of South Africa's most valuable locomotives to continue to be vandalised and to rot in the veld. SIA's approach is that we cannot necessarily wait much longer for Eskom to deal with the matter and we have set ourselves a deadline of the middle of April to progress this matter in a more robust fashion. HRASA recently suggested that a joint meeting be set-up between HRASA, SIA and Eskom to discuss the matter and this may well have merit. In fact it is probably the approach that SIA will adopt from 15 April onwards.

In case our members think that these are hollow statements there have been specific cases where private sector organisations have put their money on the table. When we were told that the Millsite locomotives would be released De Beers immediately arranged to send a low bed to collect a locomotive that had historical connections to Kimberley. The Sandstone Heritage Trust issued an order to Transcor, the heavy haulage company, to move 7 locomotives. Neither haulage company was given access to the site and of course those arrangements then had to be cancelled.

That is where we are now. It does not mean to say SIA members cannot continue to have a voice and it does not mean to say that people who really want things to happen cannot step forward with money, ideas, donations, big lorries or whatever

It is not our intention to feed our members nothing but bad news. There are things happening which fall into the good news category but there would be an avalanche of good news if the authorities changed their approach and stopped hiding behind the wall of silence.

Many SIA members have supplied us with details of the state of the SANRASM assets, photographs etc. Please send your e-mails expressing concern directly to Lorna Ndlela at Lorna.Ndlela@eskom.co.za. or Lawrence Posniak at lawrence.posniak@eskom.co.za. or both.

SANRASM are completely below the parapet but Eskom at least are keeping the door open and seem to realise that there is a problem. The more information they receive the more likely they are to understand that this is an issue where there is an international outcry regarding the fact that items were offered to SANRASM by Mines and other donors in good faith only to watch them being dumped in the veld and abandoned.

For related articles on Eskom, which has ongoing management problems, please see:

http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=94801
http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=94461

# THE SANDSTONE HERITIGE TRUST APPROACHES SANRASM

The workload at the Bloemfontein Works of the Sandstone Heritage Trust is declining due to lack of projects. An approach was made on 9th November 2009 to SANRASM to discuss the matter. Here is a copy of the approach together with the photographs:

Sent: 09 November 2009 08:51 AM
To: Lawrence Posniak
Subject: FW: SANRASM

Dear Lawrence,

We would very much like to meet with your committee to discuss the restoration of the attached locomotive by our Bloemfontein works.

Regards,
Michael C. Myers



*Hunslet NG locomotive*

# DAMAGE TO LOCOMOTIVES IN KIMBERLEY

Locomotives at both Kimberley (Steamnet 2000) and the Sandstone Heritage Trust 3'6" locomotive shed in Ficksburg have come under attack with considerable damage being done to a number of locomotives. In both cases remedial action and extra security has been put in place. Sandstone is in fact demolishing the facility completely and incorporating the locomotives on the Narrow Gauge site for improved security (see http://www.sandstone-estates.com/index.php/railway-heritage/2ft-narrow-gauge/265-today-was-a-dark-day).

The matter of vandalism of Railway Heritage items has been drawn to the attention of SAHRA, the South African Heritage Resources Agency, on a number of occasions. Regina Isaacs, Manager: Heritage Objects Unit, responded recently:

Sent: 16 March 2010 12:21 PM
To: 'REGINA ISAACS'
Subject: Vandalism of heritage items.

Dear Regina,

Please see the attached (http://www.sandstone-estates.com/index.php/railway-heritage/2ft-narrow-gauge/265-today-was-a-dark-day)).

I regret to advise that one of our major locomotive storage facilities has been very badly vandalized. Our total loss is in the region of R650,000.00

We have written to you about a number of threatened sites in the past. This particular facility is being demolished due to the high costs of putting in meaningful security.

Regards,
Michael C. Myers

-----Original Message-----
From: REGINA ISAACS [mailto:RISAACS@sahra.org.za]
Sent: 16 March 2010 01:25 PM
Subject: Re: Vandalism of heritage items.

Dear Michael

The vandalism of significant sites and objects is an unfortunate occurrence.

Thank you for the graphics and associated stories concerning the history, vandalism and theft of the two trains on the Sandstone Site.

I receive many e-mails, letters and faxes concerning heritage objects and do not off hand recall receiving any information concerning sites from you. In any case, information concerning sites should be referred to the relevant SAHRA Provincial Office responsible for managing sites of national significance in the Province.

Yours sincerely
Regina Isaacs
Manager: Heritage Objects Unit
SAHRA

Steamnet 2000 has put out an appeal for funding to assist in protecting the locomotives. We have recommended to them that they work with SIA to create a consolidated pool of resources to address these types of issues. Bearing in mind that the locomotives that are looked after by Steamnet 2000 are lend/lease locomotives and in terms of the new policy that we think is evolving they might come up for sale which mean they could be purchased by private buyers who would work with Steamnet 2000 to ensure that they were looked after.

Peter Odell has sent the following e-mail to Brian Murison of Transnet Heritage:

To: Brian.Murison@transnet.net
Cc: Chris Janisch ; Ian Pretorius ; secretary@hrasa.co.za
Sent: Sunday, February 07, 2010 4:31 PM
Subject: Serious Copper Theft at Beaconsfield.

Dear Brian,

I am not sure of your current position so am copying this to HRASA also for their attention and to forward urgently for me to the relevant current Transnet Foundation officials for attention.[Chris/Ian/Nerina please do so]

As you are aware Steamnet 2000 at Beaconsfield have 4 class 25NC locomotives on lease lend [Nos 3441/3457/3467/3482] plus in recent years we have taken over responsibility for 24 No 3654, 25 No 3511 & 16E No 858 which were deteriorating and loosing parts until moved to our site. ALL locomotives cared for by us have had minimal theft and been fitted with cab security gates at our expense as soon as they came into our care. We also care for a number of privately owned locomotives.

I must now sadly report that my idle boast of a theft free site has been shattered with the first major theft now occurring since 5/2002, at which time we caught thieves and had them behind bars.

On 30th January 2010 we noticed two 4m lengths of 8cm copper "delivery piping" had been sawn off 3467. Despite personally mounting an all night vigil, by 18.00 on 31st January two more 2m copper "water feed piping" had been sawn off from 3441,s tender.

Further investigation shows "hacksaw marks" on various pipes on 3511, 858, 3441 & Nr 398 where clearly the thieves have investigated which pipes are copper and which steel and no doubt form their next target. Razor wire strung between locomotives and around said pipes has proved no deterrent, but it is clear the theft is being committed at night. A) pipes removed have been in shadow of our floodlights. B) bees protect 3467 during daytime.

The action Steamnet 2000 has taken since has been intense but unsustainable in the long term. We have received overwhelming help from Transnet Security including provision of 2 guards for the Sunday night of 31st until we could arrange our own. [Swani Swanepoel 0833084964 & Potty Potgieter 0833084983]

Since Monday 01 Feb we have contracted "Mapogo security" [0835818974] who are providing 2 seriously armed guards daily from 18.00 until 06.00 at R280 nightly.

I have opened dockets for both thefts at S A P Kimberley [MAS 90/2/2010 for 3441 & MAS 153/2/2010 for 3467] and contacted S A P "organised crime" [Insp Abrahams 0824696396]who responded within 90 mins, took further statements and inspected the site.

I have further visited all 4 scrap yards in Kimberley, spoken to each owner and the persons in charge of receiving scrap and obtained their cooperation. [I think!]

We have 3 "suspects" in mind. a) Locals from adjacent shanty town since there are now 16 holes in Transnet's boundary fence, b) Transnet's own security provided by "Defensor" security company with up to 8 of them lounging at "open" security gate at entrance to Beaconsfield depot, they are also aware the steam locos have security now. c) An ex Beaconsfield steam driver recently "back in town" but he should know which pipes to target.

Our biggest concern is that Unique Condensor No 3511 will be the next target, this loco is probably the most important in South Africa being the only one of its type in the World.[apart from a derelict one at Millsite] Particularly the 12cm thick, 10m long copper tender pipes would cost thousands to replace.

Steamnet 2000 committee is committed to spending our last cash reserves to protect our collection but this can only last for a few months.

We suggest 2 solutions.

1. TF to take over our security patrol costs or grant us funds of approx R5,000 monthly for this purpose
2. Put the whole collection back into roads 3/4/5 in the shed, originally set out for TF Prestige loco use, and rebuild and relock the gates at each end. These lines are now used for Transnet's emergency train and equipment.

Help and Assistance is now urgently needed.

Peter J Odell
[on behalf of Steamnet 2000 Committee]
Tel: 0828562277

Brian Murison's response is as follows:

From: Brian.Murison@transnet.net
To: s2000@vodamail.co.za
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2010 9:24 AM
Subject: RE: Serious Copper Theft at Beaconsfield.

Dear Peter,

I think the channels of communication through HRASA is the correct one to follow with regards to all aspects involving Heritage rolling stock. Please do not send queries or requests to me. A heritage committee has been put together to deal with these matters. Speak to Chris Janisch. I am sure HRASA has representation on the committee.

Regards
Brian



*Above picture shows damage done to 3441. Photograph supplied by Brian Murison*




*This picture shows the damage to 3467. Photograph supplied by Brian Murison*

***Editors comments.***

***Brian ignores the fact that HRASA have no resources or written authority to act.***

## De Aar Locomotives.

Many SIA members have drawn our attention to the locos abandoned at De Aar. Peter Odell has updated us as per the communication to HRASA below:

Sent: 20 January 2010 12:15
To: Chris Janisch

**The 4 steam locos abandoned at De Aar.**

1. Class 8 No 1236 plinthed on platform in 70,s moved to depot in 80,s now standing[presumably]on its short length of track with 2 old trucks in the abandoned shed yard. Until a few years ago this loco was supershine and complete. Not seen it since 2003.

2. Class 24 No 3652 owned by a defunct SADF cover company during the Angolan border war. Arrived De Aar from Voorbaai in full working condition approx 1987. Now derelict and probably isolated from network in abandoned shed yard.

In the 70's it was found the class GO Garratt and 12A would become extinct with no class members preserved. Myself and John Gilberthorpe, both then at De Aar, pushed then SAR museum curator the late Alan Clarke to save one of each. He agreed and we surveyed the numerous locos on site and selected the best two. 12A 2111 & GO 2576 now both part of TFHP "collection" at Millsite and Voorbaai. SANRASM then expressed an interest and we again selected the next best for them. These 2 were donated by SAR museum to SANRASM and are still standing there today. Obviously we based our choice on driving wheel condition and boiler records. These 2 are of course now totally stripped. Over the years I have many times asked Lawrence [has he ever seen these 2 locos???] to allow me to get them towed one dark night to our site at Beaconsfield for safekeeping, he refused. Now I no longer drive the line, or have contacts to do it and anyway they are now standing isolated from the network in the depot yard.

3. Class 12A No 2123 abandoned by SANRASM

4. Class GO N 2586 abandoned by SANRASM one of only 2 survivors of unique class of 25 lightweight modern Garratts.

What can we do to save these 4 from eventual cutting?

Regards,
Peter J Odell

***SIA response: SIA has addressed a letter to the Transnet Foundation saying that there is potential interest in purchasing these for the private sector. Members need to step forward now. We have had some indication of interest for these locomotives from SIA members previously.***



*'25NC 3488 De Aar shed 1991 NL'*
*Photograph by John Gilberthorpe*

## "Blackie", Cape Town Station

We were advised by an SIA member that Blackie, the world famous locomotive built by Hawthorns & Co Leith Engine Works in Scotland, which was originally in Cape Town Station, was in dire straits and had been scrapped. In fact that is not true. It is in storage and according to the South African Heritage Resources Agency is locked up in a warehouse pending its reallocation to a new site.

SIA and HRASA members visited the warehouse recently and Andy Selfe filed this report.

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

SIA comment: Thanks Andy for a job well done.

## APPEAL FOR FUNDS TO COPY VALUABLE PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

Are any members interested in receiving a copy of the Croxton Collection? If so read the following from Peter Bagshawe:

Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2009 11:16 PM

I have located the "Croxton Collection"! I was recently reading "Steam Train Romance" by Michael Walker, and noticed that some of the photos were credited to the collection. According to the credits they were courtesy of the Cape Western Railway Society. I have been in touch with Malcolm Ridgard of the CWRS and he tells me that, after Tony Croxton died, his widow offered the CWRS three albums of photographs which were duly accepted. Malcolm guesses there must be around 200 photos. Unfortunately no inventory of the photos has been made (but I understand that they do have captions) so it is not confirmed that the photos on the SHT Site Visitor site are included. Unfortunately, the collection is only accessible by visiting the society in Cape Town. This can be arranged by Malcolm Ridgard, Tel 021 559 4282, email fjr641@absamail.co.za. (I have his permission to publish his details).

Regards
Peter

We have made a number of attempts to contract with people to do this on SIA's behalf but no one has been prepared to do the job other than for an unrealistic amount of money.

# SIA APPROACHES MINISTER OF TOURISM...

## ...who is about to be posted to UN?

Sent: 20 October 2009 02:47 PM
To: ministry@tourism.gov.net
Subject: Rail tourism in South Africa
Dear Minister Van Schalkwyk,

We have as a preservation organisation attempted to correspond with you on a number of occasions regarding rail tourism, in particular steam railway tourism in South Africa, but we have unfortunately had no responses from you or your department.

It is sad that our country which was regarded as the steam train Mecca of the world now pays scant attention to what was and could again surely be revenue generating tourist attraction. The rail network in South Africa brought economic growth to rural areas and rail tourism has the ability to do this again if only it was supported.

We thought the attached may be of interest to you, It shows that the decimation of our once proud and people friendly rail system is still suffering from neglect. Rail tourism will in time be impossible to resuscitate because it would be impossible to fund it.

Your comments would be appreciated.

October 2009

Paul Ash, an avid Steam in Action member, recently posted the following article on the Times Live website...

Please click here to view as we believe it is well worth the read.

On behalf of the Advisory Board

Yours sincerely,

Michael C. Myers

Mike Myers has been driving this process and here is his summary and update on our progress:

Herewith an update on our attempt to meet with the DG of Tourism.

We corresponded over a number of years with the Minister of Tourism Marthinus van Schalkwyk regarding the future of Rail Tourism in South Africa in the hope that a meeting could be set up to discuss Rail Tourism and to ascertain exactly what government's policies and strategy were but we unfortunately never received a response. A letter sent late last year urging him to respond resulted in a letter being received advising that we should meet with the Director general of Tourism in Pretoria namely Ms. Nhlumayo.

After a number of telephone calls to the DG's office we were able to discuss the meeting with her secretary Karabo Telekwa. A meeting date was provided at very short notice and a day or two later we were requested to submit a presentation outlining what the discussions were about. It was decided that HRASA should be involved and Dudley Smith and Chris Janisch were contacted with a view to inviting them to attend and to assist with putting the presentation together. It was our view that as HRASA was the body that oversaw Rail Heritage Tourism issues in South Africa that their attendance was essential as they would have to carry the discussion forward into the future.

It was agreed that the date for the meeting did not allow enough time for the parties to be able to arrange to get together in Pretoria and that there was not enough time to complete a presentation and we therefore requested a later a date for the meeting which was set for the 2nd of March. Dudley Smith kindly provided the presentation documentation requested by the DG's office and this was sent off to them.

Sometime later we were advised that the meeting had to be cancelled as the DG had other business that she needed to attend to on the 2nd of March and that the meeting would be rescheduled.

Dudley Smith had already booked his airline tickets and decided to call the DG's office to fix a date so that the airline ticket could be amended. He was not able to get a firm date. Regular calls from our office did not achieve anything either.

We have discovered in a recent call to the DG's office that the secretary is no longer in her position and that the DG is away until the 18th of March which leaves our attempts to set up a meeting somewhat up in the air. In an attempt to try and firm up a meeting, messages have been left for the Acting DG a Miss Malan to call us back to see if she could assist. Dudley Smith has in the meantime ascertained that the DG we were told to meet with may not in fact be the correct person to talk to and that we should in fact be taking to a Mr. Van Schalkwyk (not the Minister) who is the DG for Tourism Development.

We will continue to talk to the DG's office in Pretoria as this was the person we were advised to talk to by the Minister and at the same time Dudley Smith will endeavour to locate Mr. Van Schalkwyk.

Michael Myers

SIA Comment: Despite numerous discussions on the phone and some limited correspondence the Director General has effectively dodged the Minister's instructions to meet with HRASA and SIA. It was agreed that if such a meeting could take place SIA and HRASA would cooperate in its response. We will continue to pressurize the Department of Tourism to look seriously at Railway Preservation as an upcoming tourist attraction for South Africa.

The South African media is very much aware of the importance of Rail Tourism as a component in South Africa's overall tourist industry.

# OUTENIQUA CHOO-TJOE

SIA has received the following update:

From: Tammy Evans [mailto:Tevans@pgwc.gov.za]
Sent: 09 March 2010 12:15

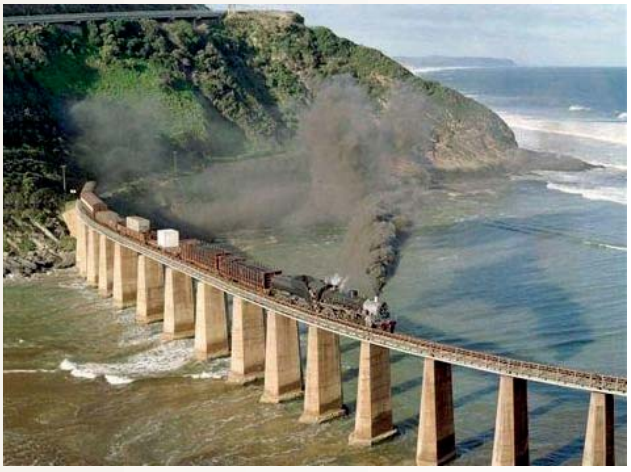
Minister Winde has been updated as to how far the Choo-Tjoe has come along. However, at this stage, the information received remains sensitive.

I can assure you that in combination with Transnet, we will soon be releasing information in this regard.

We are sorry that we have to keep the public in the dark - this is to protect the identity of the bidders.

Best wishes,
Tammy

***Editors comment: We are concerned that once again this matter is being handled in secret and although we appreciate that the tender adjudication has to be handled discreetly it seems strange that no one is prepared to issue any statement advising when the outcome will be made public.***



*George - Knysna, Kaaimans River bridge, 1989*

We have received the following additional information:

## Rovos Rail halts service to George

From The George Herald 4th March 2010.....

GEORGE - The cost factor is the main reason why the luxury steam train service, Rovos Rail halted its service to the Southern Cape. The world recession and drop-off in demand also played a role.

David Patrick, marketing manager said this week: "This is a very expensive piece of track to use, as diesel locomotives supplied by Spoornet have to be used for traction all the way from Cape Town to George and vice-versa. Electric unit traction as found on most other mainline services, is much cheaper. "For the entire time that we have been operating this route we have never really managed to operate it profitably due to these high costs and the very seasonal nature of frequency - four journeys per year in each direction and only during the summer months. "Unfortunately in the current recessionary environment we cannot afford to subsidise routes that cannot pay for themselves and this was the main motivation for ending what was otherwise a very scenic and enjoyable journey."



*Rovos Rail operating on the George line.*
*Photograph supplied by Rob Adams*

Patrick was asked to comment after two railway enthusiasts were informed by Rovos train manager, Mart Marais, that she found the railway infrastructure in a poor condition. Marais also told Anica Krüger that Rovos suffered R3 000 crockery breakage damages during a single dinner sitting on Friday evening. The section between Ashton and Mossel Bay was mentioned in particular. She told Krüger: "The company feels the route is simply not safe anymore for their passengers. Rovos will no longer bring visitors to George due to the extremely bad condition of the railway line."

# DEVELOPER IN DURBAN LOOKING FOR A LOCOMOTIVE TO PLINTH

A developer on the waterfront in Durban is looking for a locomotive. If any SIA members have a locomotive they would like to put on display in the Durban Waterfront Please contact Neels Brink on e-mail neels@laurusco.com

# FEEDBACK ON RED DEVIL

A number of our members have been sending us e-mails over the last couple of months asking what the status is with the Red Devil. We were assured that it was in safe and secure custody but in fact upon further investigation we realised that this was not the case and items were being stolen from it. We have had a bad run of locos coming under attack in recent weeks and there was no reason to suspect that the Red Devil would be spared.

One of our members, Andy Selfe, volunteered to manufacture at his expense a number of security screens and these have now been fitted. Andy's report appears below.

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

We need more SIA members to be proactive with regard to specific tasks like this.

SIA Comment: Thank you Andy for reading about a problem, intervening, and dealing with it.

# FIGHT TO SAVE ASSETS GOES ON

One of our members drew to our attention to the fact that some wonderful old MacTaggart steam pumps were still surviving after a fashion in the world famous but now defunct SAR&H Salt River Workshops. What is inexplicable is the fact that when this facility was closed it appears to have just been abandoned with the inference that anybody could come and take whatever they like from the facility. Because these machines are so big they have survived with some of their fittings.

Conrad Hicks, a local blacksmith, has expressed interest in trying to save them and he is working with a number of local preservationists to do just that. A detailed report is attached.

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

# MEDIA - LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL

**Usakos locomotive now out of harm's way**

21 January 2010

By: ADAM HARTMAN

USAKOS'S locomotive monument was moved to a safer site on Tuesday; a project mainly sponsored by Wesbank Transport in Walvis Bay in cooperation with TransNamib.

The old "steamer" was the unfortunate buffer of many runaway trucks that suffered brake problems coming down the long hill from Swakopmund's side. The result would be the truck smashing into the side of the locomotive at the T-junction at the end of the slope.

The last incident, which took place mid-2009, derailed the 29-tonne locomotive and its 11-tonne coal carriage, leaving the monument in a tattered condition until now.
According to Wesbank Transport's Coenie Nolte, who assisted in the operation, TransNamib set up a new segment of track near the entrance of Usakos from Windhoek's side, about 200 metres north of its original location.

Kind Regards,

Hendrik Coetzee
Tel 061 250140
Cell 0811226062

SIA comment: SIA was involved in quite an extensive dialogue with the authorities in Namibia regarding the fate of this locomotive. We are pleased to advise that action has been taken.

# MEMBER'S FEEDBACK

From: Bryn Morgan [mailto:southafricansteam@googlemail.com]
Sent: 02 November 2009 01:14
Subject: SIA Saved SAR Steam - Just my opinion...

I can't really speak for individuals and their opinions but I believe that Steam in Action is the best thing to happen to South African Steam Preservation since the slow decline of our Steam Heritage started.

Some people may disregard or even criticise what SIA has done but SIA has probably done more positive things to Preserve South African Steam that most would in a lifetime!
I cannot disregard what HRASA or any other steam "movement" has done because Steam Preservation is about every ones' effort but many organisations have had years to "buck things up" and assert themselves but who seemed unwilling or unable to do so for any number of reasons.
Everyone has a right to their opinion but what I see is years of decay and decline of our precious heritage left to rot on the "sidelines" while organisations "grovel" and squirm about trying to get those involved to see sense. I see correspondence containing polite "niceties" passed from one place to another without much progress, the "softly-softly" approach again and again being shrugged off and put through the shredder. I see lines of steam locos being cut up by the dozen while all this correspondence gets passed from pillar to post, the pride of SAR diminishing every day. I watch in despair, I know there will be nothing left soon and pray for some kind of miracle.

Then Steam in Action comes on the scene, a blazing sword of hope and salvation to those locos waiting in "dead-lines" scattered far and wide. The approach is polite but firm with the focus on saving as much as possible before it is too late, before everything is cut up.
To me, I feel as though SIA realised the dire need for action now when it matters most. I feel SIA knows that one will have to take a tougher stance against "opposition" and towards those who are complacent towards "Steam's Plight" because the "softly-softly" approach is not working and has not really worked in the past and time is critical.

I have not accounted for everything that SIA has done for South African Steam, I do not know the stats but I feel convinced that there is a big difference in what things were like before SIA came onto the Scene and what is different about what is happening to steam preservation right now and the state of affairs with our treasured steam locomotives before and after their arrival. I for one am eternally grateful to SIA because they have the intelligence to know how to get things done, there is no time to "pussyfoot" about.
I am sure that their hands-on and steadfast approach has even had a hand in helping the "Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe" in some small way.

Just for the sake of statistics, I would love to know roughly how many SAR Steam Locomotives Steam in Action have managed to help save or secure since they came into being? It has to be significant.

I would love a rough estimate of how much money has been forked out by SIA and its affiliates to save or put towards SAR Steam in terms of Preservation - purchasing locomotives/locomotive transport etc. and saving them from the scrap-heap and putting them somewhere safe?

I believe it must be close to something like a million.

Apart from the above, SIA produce an absolutely BRILLIANT and INFORMATIVE Newsletter on what they are doing and how things are moving forward - and things ARE moving forward as opposed to what was happening before SIA came onto the scene. The fact is that their steadfast approach and unwavering commitment is what is saving/what has saved what we have left from oblivion, caused a number of people to sit up and realise what a cr*p job they were doing.
Sometimes SIA may come across as brazen or using "bully" tactics but frankly if that is the only way to save what we have and get things done then so be it - once our locomotives are gone they are gone and then South African Steam will be another page in the history books.

I can't believe that someone said that SIA has caused the fragmentation (or something to that effect) of Steam Preservation Groups - that is the biggest load of bo**cks I have ever heard!!! On the contrary, what they have done is bring Steam Preservation Groups together - Friends of the Rail, Reefsteamers to name a few - who have joined forces to share drivers, skills, information and even rolling-stock to make Real Steam Preservation operation possible. Their actions have caused institutions to sit up and take notice, individuals to wake up and smell the coffee, thousands of people to come together and stand up for what they believe in - they have caused a positive effect across the whole of the South African Steam Preservation Scene not just in South Africa, but the world - their positive actions are causing positive effects around the world from people who are concerned and who feel pain seeing SAR steam locomotives being cut up.

SIA and the people who support what Steam In Action is doing is what has ultimately made the biggest contribution to saving South African Steam from being cut up. At the end of the day, if SIA has a method that works and is flexible towards the changing Preservation Environment and its politics - and it provides visible results - then let them do what they do best and all the critics can just shut their mouths and stop hindering ultimately what should have been done a long time ago.

Steam In Action...Thank You for what you have done and what you are doing. Please do not let critics stop you from doing what is right for our heritage because generations to come will have you to thank.

Regards,
Bryn Morgan

# Member's Feedback

From: Peter H. Patt [mailto:garratt1963@gmx.net]
Sent: 06 November 2009 22:12

Let me firstly point that I fully support SIA´s intention and agree with Phil´s comment that without SIA´s activities a lot of the current achievements would not have been possible. SIA played a significant and successful role in the preservation business over the last years!

The question I raised in my last letter focused on the future of SIA - as it was questioned in a previous newsletter. Being one of the few members who always read the newsletters from the 1st to the last page as soon as it is published, I couldn´t help getting the impression that sometimes a tough and harsh, even aggressive approach is not helpful in dealing with the other players in the business: the government on national and local level, their representatives and other preservation groups.

While it was good to raise the voice regarding the Millsite chaos, other issues should have been handled more diplomatically. On a lot of occasions the newsletter(s) blamed HRASA, the various railway agencies and the leading staff for incompetence and reflectance of the "true" preservation ideas (which were defined by SIA...). I found these comments not adequate, totally unhelpful, and counter-productive.

Once again: SIA has to raise the voice of active preservationists, who unarguably know more about the themes discussed than the political bureaucrats sitting in some remote offices.

But at the end, SIA´s voice is just one among others in the discussions. SIA´s honourable intentions will fail, if SIA´s arguments are seen by the other players in the game as just being squeaking, sharp, and very dissonant. It is not only important, what you say but also how you say it.

If SIA wants to bring SA´s railway preservation forward, then it has to cooperate with HRASA, Transnet, the government or others. The rich heritage of SA railroading can only be preserved by a joint effort! HRASA has been selected to be the one and only officially recognized representative body. Whether SIA likes that or not, it doesn´t change HRASA´s position. All preservation issues that need nationwide attention will now be handled by HRASA. But can SIA play a significant role in this process and contribute to the overall success if it has been fighting against HRASA and its members so vigorously in the past? SIA needs to become a more "political" player, voicing the expertise of renowned preservationists AND making SIA´s approach understood to those who have no idea of the historic value of a certain class of locomotives but distribute the public funds to help restoring it. If SIA is seen as representing only the die-hards, it will fail because nobody will listen to SIA´s arguments anymore.

Please don´t get me wrong: I am one of the diehards, too. But if SIA´s abilities to reach the goals independently from all other players in the business are not strong enough, then a new, maybe softer approach has to be selected.

Now the toughest issue: my statement of the "white man's toy" that sparked a lot of critics. While the trivial fact that the white man creates business and job opportunities for the black population is not being fully recognized by the current government (not to speak about neighbouring countries), I believe that the request of public funds for railway preservation has a tough standing amongst the governing bodies. The availability of public funds is limited. If SA would have a prosperous lottery like the UK has where lots of preservation projects are funded by the state owned lottery it would be a complete different issue. The government of SA needs to finance dozens of urgent projects at the same time - and struggles to provide the much needed funds for it. And although I might get expelled from SIA now, compared to schooling, housing, or basic medical supply, the issue of preserving a steam locomotive is completely off-topic on a nationwide level. If the government would be rich or interested in the country´s future, it could spend some Rands on preservation and would help SIA´s goals. But the government isn't rich, has a very selective view of the mid- or long-term results of its policy and has therefore no interest to support a small group of preservationist.

Don't blame me for talking straight: if I would be a black member of a black majority government, would have problems to fund even the most basic infrastructure measures, and would be blamed to be incompetent in my job by some preservation loudspeakers, I would not listen to SIA at all.
Not because I am not steam fan, or do not know anything about railways. It is simply the fact that I have to spend money for the white man without seeing any benefit for the black man.

(Private comment: you may blame for a very sketchy view of South African politics and maybe I underestimate the capabilities of South African politicians. After more than 25 years of visiting South Africa, I can't help to state that apartheid is still alive: surprisingly white and black apartheid at the same time! But this is a truly political issue and does not need to be discussed here).

I have been visiting most of SA´s preserved railways on a very regular basis over the last years. I saw only three preservation projects that create an impact on the local (black) communities: Sandstone, and, with concessions, the Apple Express and Patons County.
Astonishingly, the public appearance of some groups also lacks any "political" approach. Look at the pictures shown on the Reefsteamers homepage: white board discussing, white man shunting, white man repairing, and mostly white passengers on the train. The only black people I have found on the first three pages were 5 black ladies waiting for the train. This would not convince me funding the group.
Let's go to Friends of the Rail and have a look at their online gallery. Hmm: white family on the train, white family photographing the train, white kids watching the train, and white staff working on the train. Not very convincing either.

# MEMBER'S FEEDBACK

Now let's look at the SIA newsletters: whites everywhere. Also not really tempting to guarantee funding.

If you want to be successful in a society where the colour of your skin is more important than your knowledge or the long-term gains for the entire country, you will fail if you can't play the "colour-of-your-skin-game" correctly.

How could a dominantly white business with only limited effects on the black community successfully secure funds from a majorly black government? If I would be the one signing the funding paper, I would ask questions like: what is the impact on local communities? Do you pay tax? Do you create jobs? And if yes, for whom? Do you have a positive effect on tourism? One large rail fan group from overseas per year won't boost local tourism...

You may say, that the political game is not the core business of the railway preservation groups in SA.
I agree. You may also say, that most of the current issues like wrecking steam locomotives at Voorbai, closing sheds and museums, destroying valuable pieces of railway equipment is not the preservation's fault. I agree. Nevertheless the preservation groups are forced to deal with bureaucrats and politicians if they want/need to get out of their corner and change something. They compete for limited resources and if the government´s political short-sight on the one hand and the "non-political" approach of SIA and the preservation scene on the other hand don't change, SIA will fail. Only if the railway preservation in SA can show that it makes a difference, it will achieve the goals that we all strive for! It needs a combined effort of SIA, all preservation groups, HRASA, Trans-/Spoornet, the tourism industry and overseas visitors to get it done!

I don't want to make this an entire evening's reading. Too much to say about it but not enough time...

Again, many thanks for giving me the opportunity to contribute,

Best Regards,
Peter

***Editor's comment: SIA has quite a number of black African members and we are in contact with them to ask for their further advice and guidance in these matters. Our view is that this is not a situation which needs to be subjected to racial scrutiny. The demographics of Rail enthusiasts is what it is and SIA has a completely open and even handed approach to the question of membership.***

From: ALCOAFRICA@aol.com [mailto:ALCOAFRICA@aol.com]
Sent: 05 March 2010 06:19
Subject: SIA

I hope this finds you very well.
But what has now happened to SIA?

Will there be no more newsletters? If not, why or how did this happen?

I was really enjoying being part of this endeavour, and feel upset that it has now collapsed.

Take care
Alan Coe

***Editor's comment: This newsletter refers.***

We received the following the e-mail from a prospective member:

From: Muhammad Yusuf Omar [mailto:mydomar@gmail.com]
Sent: 10 February 2010 12:17
Subject: railway heritage

To whom it may concern:

I have a project for university and would like to find out if you could give me some information on the different railway heritage/preservation activities in South Africa and do you think they deserve government support and if so , what form of support.

Thanks
MUHAMMAD YUSUF OMAR
0723967445
mydomar@gmail.com

***SIA comment: If anyone would like to communicate with him please feel free.***

# USEFUL LINKS

http://www.flickr.com/photos/hilton-t/

# ARCHIVES

Our stalwart supporter and provider of much archive information, Dennis Mitchell, has a new e-mail address. For those who would like to communicate with Dennis direct here is his address: dampjaack@optusnet.com.au.

Carlos Veira has sent us an interesting selection of photos which we are grateful for.

From: carlos vieira [mailto:cvieira3@hotmail.com]
Sent: 17 February 2010 18:28

I am enclosing some old photos of Angolan railways which I know you will appreciate and would like to keep them in your records.

If and when I find anything else of historic interest I will make sure you will get a copy of such.

Once again many thanks for your attention.

Regards
Carlos

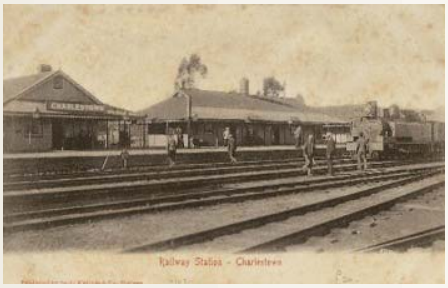


















**This newsletter was prepared by Wilfred Mole, Andy Selfe, and Michael Myers, with the assistance and support of many SIA members. All SIA members should consider themselves members of an 'Advisory Board'. Please feel free to communicate with us and send your contributions to joannewest@btinternet.com.**

**Reminder: Our website is live and our membership subscription service is operating. Please spread the word.**