

ISSUE 434 APRIL 2026 £5.50

OLD GLORY

STEAM & VINTAGE PRESERVATION

HERITAGE



RIVER BED CLAYTON PORTABLE TO BE REBUILT

THOUGHT ABOUT
BUYING AN
AUSTIN SEVEN? P1

CAUGHT IN TIME -
WW1 LORRIES

SAVING FOXFIELD
COLLIERY

RICHARD PIERCE
TRIBUTE

RYHOPE PUMPING
STATION

KEITH HADDOCK'S
PLANT COLUMN

PLUS

- STATIONARY ENGINE
- NEWS ■ MARKET PLACE



TRACTOR WORLD
BUGATTI RAILCAR
STARS AT
RETROMOBILE

ALL MOTOR
ROLLERS
WANTED FOR
TRACTOR FEST

HARVESTING
THE WHEAT
IN SA

AUSTRALIA'S
BIGGEST EVENT
FOR YEARS

SOMERSET VINTAGE
BATTLES WEATHER



BARROWS THEME AT HOLLYCOMBE



SE PEOPLE PROFILE 2



MARSHALL MOVES TO COUNTY CARLOW

HARVESTING THE WHEAT



▲ Great to see the ex SER NG10 No. 61 1916 Baldwin 4-6-2 pacific *Ouma* with the New Holland combine (made in Belgium) getting ready to dump its grain. Photo: Dave Richardson



▲ What a great sight with the WW1 Baldwin of Philadelphia-made NG10 at the head end. Photo: Dave Richardson



▲ Off the grain train goes to the grain hoppers. Photo: Dave Richardson



▲ Out and running at the Cosmos Festival over Easter will be Sandstone's Fowler B5. Photo: Dave Richardson



▲ Great to see the International Harvester Co 1907 high-wheeler which were very successful in their time. This one has an air-cooled engine with Wilfred Mole at the controls. Photo: Dave Richardson



▲ The big boys will be out on the track over Easter. Photo: Dave Richardson

Sandstone Estates was acquired by the current owners in 1995, long before there was a 2ft narrow gauge railway on the property. How the railway came about is another story, but it was never planned. It is now a world famous steam railway centre and the only privately owned preserved railway in Southern Africa today. Being narrow gauge, it has some limits but the old SAR (South African Railways) achieved great things on such narrow rails just as they did on the full-size system, also with narrow rails at 3ft 6in apart, but a loading gauge identical to that of Britain with its standard gauge railway.

Sandstone Estates is a working farm and is noted worldwide for its various historic collections such as the 2ft railway, vintage tractors and farming equipment, earthmoving equipment, military vehicles plus many old road vehicles such as buses, cars, and trucks.

Sandstone is a large farm measuring as much as 20 kilometres from end to end in places and 10kms wide. When the 2ft narrow gauge railway was built it tended to follow the roads through or near to the farm lands, so it was never far from crops that were growing. As the railway developed so the collection of locomotives and rolling stock also grew.

Wagons were acquired in all shapes and sizes and although freight

trains were conceived originally as photographic experience for visitors, it soon became apparent that the railway could play its part in farming activities, particularly at harvest time. With such long distances, from the lands to the storage areas for produce in the main complex of the farm, the sheer cost of ever increasing fossil fuel prices was being looked at carefully. For short-haul simple tasks, for example, Sandstone's team of Afrikaner oxen with suitable wagons are used to pick up and drop off materials for farm activities as well as rubbish collection.

Harvest time over 5000 hectares is an intensive affair, not every area is harvest-ready at the same time but, once any harvest is ready, it needs to be brought in promptly. Grain is a particular item that is large in bulk and weight and needs to be harvested promptly and speedily put into the correct storage prior to being sold. The sheer size of road vehicles needed to bring grain to the silos is impressive but so is the fuel consumption and just as with road transport on highways, using the railway can move larger loads at less cost.

As the Sandstone Steam Railway routes grew across the farm, the owners realised that in many locations they had the ability to bring in the harvest at less cost and in larger bulk moves plus save



▲ Heading from Grootdraal by the maze fields goes a multitude of vintage machinery. Photo: Dave Richardson

money on expensive diesel fuel. And so the 'Grain Train' was born. It has not been run every single year as conditions were not always favourable for using rail. Large loads were often moved in open trucks, but the weather must be on side for this and this tended to limit activities to drier conditions although the acquisition of more closed wagons that are suitable for transporting grain has opened up more possibilities. Also, the suitability of the rail line being on level ground next to the land and suitable length so that access by the combines is easy and safe.

The stars aligned on 6 January 2026, and two combines working near the Avondzon area were lined up next to a level and straight section of line on the route to Sekonyela. This is some 10kms from Hoekfontein, the main farm complex. Baldwin 4-6-2 pacific NG10 No. 61 was selected for the task with two ex-SAR O class wagons, originally

used for transporting apples from the Langkloof area near Port Elizabeth. The 1915-built Baldwin is quite a powerful locomotive for its size and could handle the two wagons with ease. No. 61 was originally preserved by South African Railways but left to the elements in the corrosive sea air at Humewood Road shed in Port Elizabeth around 1962. Sandstone purchased the locomotive and brought it up to Bloemfontein for assessment but primarily to get it away from the sea air.

Restoration began in 2016 after the restoration of NGG11, No. 52, was completed and No. 61 was completed by April 2019, in time for the 'Stars of Sandstone' event, and was named *Ouma* in memory of one of the Sandstone director's mother. The NG10

was the last locomotive to be restored by Lukas Nel and the Sandstone team in Bloemfontein and proved to be one of the most difficult with many new parts constructed, such as the tender tank, buffer beam, and chimney. A replica of the original toolbox on the rear buffer beam completed the job.

Early on 6 January No. 61 and its two freight wagons made its way to the Avondzon farm in the capable hands of driver Thinus Dennis and fireman Bryne Vusi. It took some time to get the exact position line up as the two combines made a number of trips after harvesting so that the two wagons were full of grain. After four hours No. 61 made her way forward to Sekonyela and reversed direction on the balloon for the journey back to Hoekfontein with its full load.

Lining up next to the silos, both wagons were soon emptied by the powerful vacuum equipment on site and the grain placed in storage.

Sandstone does not transport grain by steam every day, but we proved that we still have the capabilities to do it at any time. The 'Grain Train' will be back on the rails soon, as there is much harvesting still to do.

A compelling short video of harvesting by rail was made by Frameline some years back featuring NG15 No. 17 with a rake of modified, high-sided B wagons. You can view this on YouTube on the following link: https://youtu.be/2ac_D4UEIAw. Don't forget the Cosmos Festival that take place over 2-5 April, there is still time to book and take part in this great event.

SOMERSET VINTAGE BATTLES THE WEATHER



▲ Seen in the themed hall area, the punters had plenty to see here. Photo: SVTS



▲ Trade stands were inside and out and were very busy when visiting on the Saturday. Photo: SVTS



▲ As can be seen, the crowd on Saturday morning was nothing but busy. Photo: SVTS

Approximately 220 entries gathered together for the annual Somerset Vintage & Classic Tractor Show at the Royal Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallet on January 31-1 February, reports *Joseph Lewis*.

The organisers lead by Mike and Margaret Mitchell battled with localised flooding and circling showers over the weekend, but despite all of this the crowds still came both days of the show and kept it in the black.

The themed section was rather down this year, featuring single and twin-cylindered tractors. Here the Smith's original-style 1924 Eagle 20-40 H No. 1417 was of great interest. These were made in Appleton, Wisconsin, USA from 1923-29. The company made its first tractor in 1906

and lasted until 1941 before being sold off to the Four Wheel Drive Automotive Co of Clintonville, Wisconsin.

A trio of Marshall M tractors (1939-45) were seen including a gaily-decorated roofed 1942 contractor's model that worked in a threshing contractor's business near Launceston, Cornwall and is now owned by P Trebilcock. Also spotted were two other original-style examples both owned by Daniel Taylor. One of these came from his uncle Ian Dawson and his late grandfather who purchased it from a 1993 sale in Stroud. Also in the themed display was Chris Beasley from Reading who brought two tractors, a 1959 Porsche Junior which at some stage had been used on mowing duties and he also had here his fine 1941 John Deere BN.



▲ Major show winner David Aylward is seen with his excellent Marshall Series 3 with his chief mechanic holding yet another award. Photo: Joseph Lewis

Best In Show and concours winner went to David Aylward from Andover and his famous 1949 Field Marshall Series 3 No.12360. Looking superb