



# Stars of Sandstone

NEWSLETTER NO: XII

LESS THAN 130 DAYS TO GO



*The Eastern Free State where Sandstone Estates is located, is true high altitude African savannah.  
A truly undiscovered part of the world for most people.*

## How did we come into existence?

The Sandstone Heritage Trust has evolved from a private collection of interesting Heritage items, originally Agricultural, and then later on as a result of the closure of the Midmar Museum in Natal we became involved in 2-ft Narrow Gauge steam and railway-related activities. We were then approached by the Armour Museum in Bloemfontein to form a joint venture with them, and that has been hugely successful over the years.

At no stage did we see ourselves as major tourist destination because we did not have the personnel or the facilities to do that. We did however, in the early days, host a number of very key events, starting in 1999 with the Great 100 Working, where we set-up the World Record for vintage tractor ploughing. This record-breaking programme bounced around the world with Australia, Britain and Ireland all competing and winning and breaking the record. We broke it twice, the second time was in 2002 with the Great 400 Working, and many thousands of people attended that. It is for that particular event that we are probably the best known, both in South Africa & internationally.

In order to follow up on the success of that event, we have held Open Days under various names, *inter alia* Cosmos Festival, Under African Skies



etc and then we settled on the **Stars of Sandstone** concept and this is now our fourth Stars event. Because of our expanded footprint it is bigger and better, and this year we have really gone out and accepted the responsibility that rests on our shoulders to provide a proper Tourism experience for both local and international tourists alike.

*A double header at dawn. A photographer's dream.  
Photo credit: Rod Hering*

In other words, we have bowed to the will of the people and will now place much more emphasis on visitor facilities and enjoyment.





## SANDSTONE RECEIVES GOLD AWARD FOR TOURISM

In early September 2016, during a meeting with First National Bank, Sandstone's banker, Sandstone was informed by Mohammed Cassim, Segment Head of FNB, that FNB had nominated Sandstone for the ROCCI/FNB Business of the Year Award. The ROCCI/FNB awards accepts nominations from far and wide.

In mid-September Sandstone received the following (extract):

"Congratulations to Sandstone Estates, your Company received a nomination(s) for the Prestigious ROCCI/FNB Business of the Year awards 2016.

The Annual Business of the Year Awards is recognized as one of the most prestigious business events.

ROCCI Chamber has received a nomination/s for your company to be selected for the Business of the Year Awards 2016, congratulations. Just being nominated is an acknowledgement of your business' Success and Impact in the Industry."

Sandstone was invited to do a presentation on 26 September 2016 to a panel of judges made up of FNB, SAICA (South African Institute of Chartered Accountants – Chief Adjudicator), Business Partners and Ellen Oosthuizen from BEBE's Events.

97 Companies were nominated in 20 categories which included Large Corporations and Listed Companies, Medium Sized Businesses, SMEs, Most Promising Young Entrepreneur and Tourism.

Sandstone was then invited to attend a sumptuous and glittering gala evening at the Silverstar Casino on 5 November 2016 to announce the Bronze, Silver and Gold Award winners.

Later in the evening, Sandstone was honoured and delighted to receive the Gold Winner Award for Tourism which was presented by Mr Gerhard Ferreira – Chairman of SAICA and Mr Mohammed Cassim – Segment Head of FNB.



*Sandstone Estates' Director, Michael Myers accepting the Gold Winner Award. He is bracketed by Michelle Geraghty (FNB Regional Head, Gauteng South West) on the left and Marietjie Esterhuizen (ROCCI President) on the right*



Our infrastructure is nowhere near where it should be to handle something like this, but we are fortunate in being able to offer a genuine rustic experience, which is something that appeals particularly to our overseas visitors who are tired of fancy 5-star airport hotels etc. Accommodation is a huge problem for us, but the one benefit of asking people to stay in local accommodation is that it gives a boost to the Eastern Free State community overall.

We are however, working on expanding our accommodation footprint, but it takes time. Our wonderful old coaches, many of which are 100

years old, have been upgraded with new ablution facilities and that will take pressure off us.

We have a new restaurant and cafeteria and we will be offering a better experience in that regard as well.

Finally, we do now offer a non-catering option. At **Stars 2017** here will be food available from a catering village where local Eastern Free State community people will offer a range of interesting country fayre.

Winning the above 2016 Business of the Year Gold Award in the Tourism category is a feather in our cap, to say the least!

## ACCOMMODATION

### MAIN LINE STEAM

#### "AVRIL" STEAMS TO CULLINAN

After its first revenue earning run to Cullinan on September 4th 15F 3052, "Avril", owned by the Sandstone Heritage Trust, has completed four more runs to this popular destination, generating much needed income for Pretoria based Friends of the Rail (FOTR). The initial run was not without difficulties, though, as a number of problems manifested themselves on 3052 after its recent overhaul which have now been attended to.

These difficulties have now been ironed out as a result of a dedicated combined effort by Sandstone's technical support group from our Steam Division and Les Labuschagne and the team from FOTR.

The most recent run was on October 30th which was highlighted by the slash of colour from the Jacarandas close to Cullinan.

*3052 approaches Cullinan on September 4th.  
Picture by David Benn*







## STARLIGHT EXPRESS

This is a feature of our events which we started some years ago and they have been extremely popular, so there will be a lot more of them at *Stars 2017*.

We are, however, keen to ask amateur or professional astronomers to step forward because people need an explanation of what is happening in that very clear, high altitude Eastern Free State sky, where you can enjoy an empyreal experience looking at the Universe and the Milky Way.

If you are interested in assisting us, please contact Dave Richardson, E: [daver@sandstone.co.za](mailto:daver@sandstone.co.za) or C: +27 (0) 82 447 9167.

The steam trains running at night also provide great photographic opportunities, particularly when they are tucked up for the night in their comfortable steam shed.

*Sandstone's 1907 Edwardian Railway Station at night: Hoekfontein*



## TRACTION ENGINES ARE THESE OUR FORGOTTEN SOULS?

Sandstone has the largest collection of working Road Steam Engines in the country. This comprises Road locos, Agricultural Traction engines, Steam Rollers and our mighty Fowler B5 Crane Engine which dates back to 1901.

We will be working hard to make sure they are out and about every day during *Stars of Sandstone 2017*, but we do need additional support from people familiar with these wonderfully charismatic mechanical monsters.

We also have a large selection of Agricultural Portable engines which we will put on display, and operate them if we have the manpower available.

If you can assist, please contact Gert Jubileus on E: [gertj@sandstone.co.za](mailto:gertj@sandstone.co.za) C: 082 811 0254



## WE CELEBRATE ANOTHER 100th BIRTHDAY

Built in Kilmarnock, Scotland, in 1916, Barclay 0-4-2T No 1459 was the first industrial 2ft gauge locomotive acquired by Sandstone. A member of the "N" class with 9" x 14" cylinders, James Brown of the Point Engineering Works in Durban ordered it for the Umhloti Sugar Co. It was purchased, together with a spare boiler, for the Sandstone collection in 1999. Rebuilt with a new longer boiler in 2001, this was to cause endless problems with the loco. The extra weight of the boiler and in particular the firebox, which now sat further back and closer to the trailing axle, caused, in effect, a pivotal weight transfer on the rear driving wheels to the trailing axle which suffered constant overheating of its bearings.

To solve the problem it was decided to fit it with the tender purchased with the Fowler, "Sandy" and dispense with the carrying of water and coal on the loco. The rear of the cab has been removed but the tanks have been left in situ as they are of new construction. No 1459 is now a 0-4-2TT. The subsequent weight saving on the loco appears to have solved the problems and the little Barclay, now resplendent in crimson red livery, has given good service since the middle of 2005. It celebrates its 100th birthday in 2016 and carries the number Sandstone No:1.



## 2-FT NARROW GAUGE WAGON NEWS

Flats are probably the most versatile freight wagons we use. They are very suitable for our events because we can load them with military vehicles, tractors, implements, boxes, drums etc so that photographers and other participants can get a better feel for what a mixed Narrow Gauge freight train would have looked like 70 years ago.

Our ever-reliable long distance driver, Thabiso, has done a dozen or more trips to Port Elizabeth and back since the last newsletter was released. Although we can only load one fruit wagon or ballast wagon at a time, the great advantage is that we can load up to four flats stacked high. Since we send two trucks at a time, the transport cost is greatly reduced.

*Purchased as scrap, stack them high and move them economically*





## MYSTERY DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE

There is a complete rebuild taking place of an underground 2-ft Narrow Gauge Mine locomotive which was received in a dilapidated condition as one can see. Our workshops have decided to strip it down to the basic chassis and completely rebuild it. This unit is fitted with an L3 Gardner engine with a hydraulic transmission driving the rear axle by chain. From the rear axle, a further chain drive powers the front axle. Originally thought to be a General Electric unit, this is now considered unlikely because of the Gardner engine indicating possible UK manufacture. There are no serial numbers or maker's plates on the loco and we would ask our readers if anyone could identify the manufacturer. It is quite possibly a South African-built loco, as a number of local companies produced underground spec locos for the mining industry. Can anyone identify it? If so, please contact Dave Richardson, E: [daver@sandstone.co.za](mailto:daver@sandstone.co.za) or C: +27 (0) 82 447 9167

Regardless, this project is underway.

## TOP OF THE RANGE GENERAL ELECTRIC CLASS 91 2-FT NARROW GAUGE DIESEL POWER ARRIVES AT THE SANDSTONE STEAM RAILROAD!

The Port Elizabeth to Avontuur 2 ft Narrow Gauge railway was very much a viable proposition in the late 60s and early 70s for Spoornet (now Transnet Freight Rail [TFR]). With heavy limestone traffic from Loerie to the EPCC cement factory in New Brighton, and fruit traffic from the Langkloof, it was decided to dieselise the line and set aside the ageing NGG13 and 16 Garratts and the NG15 locos.

Twenty locomotives of the General Electric Type UM6B were ordered, this being a variation of their standard Narrow Gauge U6B. All the units were delivered in 1973.

Design for the 2ft gauge caused difficulties and the bogies had to be specially designed with the traction motors between the axles. The Class 91 was to become the largest 2ft gauge diesel electric locomotive in the world. Fitted with a Caterpillar D375 turbo charged V8 engine, they were rated at 600hp and had a maximum speed of 50kmh.

By the end of the 80s the Langkloof fruit traffic was now on road transport, although the Patensie Branch still carried seasonal citrus. The major traffic from Loerie was lost when the limestone quarry closed in 2004 and this signified the beginning of the end for this iconic railway.

By 2009, TFR had decided that the line was not viable and all revenue traffic ceased. Although the Apple Express operated a final train on the line in 2011, the line remains out of use but not officially closed.

The fate of the remaining 19 Class 91 diesels, 91-014 having been written off in an accident, was hanging in the balance. However in 1992, TFR had hired some 91 Class diesels to the Alfred County Railway in Port Shepstone, and, by fitting bogies from the 36 Class Cape Gauge locos, had enabled them to travel under their own power to Kwa Zulu Natal. This conversion led to the nickname for the converted units of "Bigfoot". This transport solution proved to be a lifesaver for the 91s and a number were sold off to industry and regauged for a new life on a mine. A number of them were retained at Humewood Road depot in Port Elizabeth, but the sea air has seen them deteriorate badly. 91-010 was also regauged to 3'6" and was used for shunting in the Port Elizabeth area, particularly Swartkops Electric Depot.

After a minor electrical problem in 2013, the locomotive was staged for repair but this never took place and the loco was offered for sale on auction in September, minus the 3'6" so-called "Bigfoot" bogies. This loco was acquired by Sandstone Heritage Trust and a set of 2ft gauge bogies obtained. The loco was transported by road to Sandstone, arriving on Monday, 31 October 2016.

After a complex unloading process, during which the interior of the locomotive was discovered as being full of spiders and required fumigating, 91-010 is now in the Sandstone Depot undergoing a cosmetic makeover.

During November, 91-010 will undergo an inspection by a qualified 91 Class diesel fitter. Initially, she will be repainted in Spoornet orange but this may be changed to original SAR Maroon with yellow "whiskers" and cast number plates if time allows. The loco is expected to make a "Star" appearance at *Stars of Sandstone 2017*.

91-010 is a worthy locomotive for 2 ft Narrow Gauge preservation as an example of the final piece of the timeline of 2ft Narrow Gauge history in South Africa.



91-007 and an unidentified sister near Patensie with fruit vans for loading in June 1996.  
Picture by Dave Richardson



Left & above, once safely in the Sandstone depot, the maintenance team immediately commenced cleaning and repainting the Class 91 in Spoornet orange





## HISTORIC LOCO RESTORATION PROGRESS

With the NGG11 all but complete, work has commenced on the NG10, built by Baldwin, USA, Loco No. 42633. The tender was in very poor condition and is having to be totally rebuilt.

A similar loco (pictured left) is at Brecon Mountain Railway in Wales, but was built in 1930 to a similar design. Sandstone representatives recently visited that railway and were very impressed with the facilities and preservation achievements on this line (see: <http://www.breconmountainrailway.co.uk/>).



## WATER TANKS

Victorian Pedestal Water Tanks are becoming very rare. As a result of the cooperation and support of Transnet, we have acquired a traditional steam railway overhead water tank which, once restored, will probably be installed on our new Children's Railway.

Steam engines need water and they need it frequently, so these tanks are invaluable.



## RUNNING SHED REPORTS

In addition to this regular *Stars of Sandstone* Newsletter, our Running Shed on the farm produces an outstanding technical bulletin every fortnight or so, covering the work that they do. It is for serious-minded railway enthusiasts, mechanical engineers and people who are interested in machinery.

If you would like to be put on the mailing list to receive it, please e-mail Louise Norton at E: [tourism@sandstone.co.za](mailto:tourism@sandstone.co.za)

Here are links to recent reports:

[http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/2\\_November2016.pdf](http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/2_November2016.pdf)  
[http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/Steam\\_Report24Oct2016.pdf](http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/Steam_Report24Oct2016.pdf)  
[http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/SteamReport14\\_Oct%202016.pdf](http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/SteamReport14_Oct%202016.pdf)  
<http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/11Nov2016.pdf>

Every one contains a very interesting short historical summary of specific locomotives and interesting railway facts going back many years, produced by Les Pivnic.



## FRIENDS OF THE RAIL CALENDARS

Friends of the Rail have produced an excellent calendar which features Sandstone's two Lawleys. If anyone is interested in obtaining a copy, we ask that you please contact them direct. Chairman, Nathan Berelowitz, has provided the following information in this regard:

As usual, a great selection of photographs from top railway photographers with a page of black and white historical scenes and, not forgetting our modern traction, we have a full page of some interesting electric and diesel hauled trains. Top railway photographers have offered their services to make this, our 7th year of producing these A4 wall hanging calendars, even better than ever!

The price per calendar, excluding postage, if you live in Pretoria area and can collect, is R75 each. The price including local postage in South Africa is R85 as per normal standard mail. For registered mail please add R32.00. There are discounts on multiple copies so please contact Nathan Berelowitz for details. On request: Overseas postage rates: registered: Europe, UK, USA, AUS, NZ: To order:

- 1) please confirm order quantity by email or fmessage (Nathan Berelowitz mobile +27 (0)73 2444 962. Work: +27 (0)12 386624 email: [nbtrainman@gmail.com](mailto:nbtrainman@gmail.com))
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 Type of account: 32 day  
 Account number: 770 882 51856

Note: we are not liable for orders despatched by regular post if they go missing. Whilst we have every faith in our postal service, there may be a possibility ....!



## UNDERSTANDING OUR PAST

You cannot have such an interesting cross-section of Heritage items as we do without delving deeply into the individual history of every item. This is a massive task, but our Librarian, Judy le Grange, and Dave Richardson, the Secretary of FEDRAIL SA (see: <http://fedrail.co.za/>) are among the many people who provide us with hugely impressive and detailed summaries of the stories that lie behind the individual assets.

This month we feature our Simmer & Jack locomotive dating back to the 1880s with the compliments of Dave Richardson. There are two survivors from Simmer & Jack, namely an HK Porter locomotive built in the United States in 1902, and a North British tank from 1948.

The name Simmer & Jack is a reminder of the frontier days of the Witwatersrand and the gold rush of the 1880s that led to the birth of Johannesburg. The gold reef that ran from Randfontein in the West to Springs in the East was to lead to the birth of the East-West rail system on the Reef that exists to this day. The discovery of coal in the Boksburg area soon led the pioneers of the area to realise that the ox wagon transports of the day could not keep up with the supply of materials that were needed for the booming Reef mining area.

The town of Germiston is the oldest in the Witwatersrand community, being established in 1886 when John Jack and August Simmer purchased the farm Elandsfontein. They prospected for gold and registered the Simmer and Jack mine. The town was laid out in 1887 to house the workers, the name being chosen after a farm near Glasgow in Scotland where John Jack was born. After the railway reached Germiston in 1892, it was logical that the Simmer & Jack would become rail connected. Sadly, the mine was closed in 1969 but a number of companies continued on site to process the old Simmer & Jack dumps as mining extraction technology progressed. It remained as a museum in the early 70s but is now derelict.

A total of six locomotives operated on the mine. Nos 1 & 2 were built by HK Porter of Pittsburgh, USA in 1896 and were 2-6-2 tank locomotives. They were followed by No 3 of a similar design, being a Porter 15"x20" model, in 1902. (Porter 2443/1902)

Nos 1 & 2 were sadly scrapped in 1987/88 along with No 4, which was an ex-SARA Class tank.

No 3 is very interesting as, although it was new to Simmer & Jack, it appears to have been used as a Porter demonstrator and worked at City Deep in 1915 and also on the Zambezi Sawmills Railway in Zambia before returning to Simmer & Jack in 1921.

No 6 also survived being a NBL 2-6-2T (NBL 26242/48) as did No 5, an NBL 4-8-2T (NBL 24598/1939) which went to St Helena in 1956 and then to Vryheid Coronation in 1972 as their No 4. It was preserved at SANRASM but sadly scrapped after being badly damaged by vandals in 2010.

After years of display and then being dumped, the final two survivors on the mine, Nos 3 and 6 were saved by Sandstone. They have been moved to the Hoekfontein complex at Sandstone for an initial cosmetic restoration, but the thought of returning them to working order has not been discounted. They are the last survivors of the famous Simmer & Jack mine, one of the pioneering mines of the Reef and as such have great historical value. Both are unique in that very few Porter built locos survive and No 3 is the only surviving Porter conventional style locomotive in South Africa, there being two ex-ISCOR fireless examples preserved in Pretoria, while the majority of NBL industrial locomotives still in existence are of the NBL 4-8-2/4-8-4 industrial tank design.

To add to this unique historical event, a number of rare wooden hoppers dating from the 19th century have also been acquired from Simmer & Jack. These have a wooden underframe as well as a wooden body and are fitted with "Diamond" bogies. Unfortunately, there is little information of where they were built.

They will be cosmetically restored alongside the two locomotives.

*One of the very rare wooden hoppers, now nearly 120 years old.  
Pictures by Sandstone Heritage Trust.*



*Above, Simmer & Jack No 3. Below, Simmer & Jack No 3 after a rebuild with a modified cab. Pictures courtesy of the Dave Parsons Collection*



*No 3 after arrival at Sandstone. Picture by Dave Richardson.*



*Simmer & Jack No 6. Picture courtesy of the Dave Parsons Collection*







## A SPECIAL FEATURE OF STARS 2017

We have a very substantial cross-section of freight wagons which are being restored at a fairly rapid rate. This will enable us to deploy freight trains for the interest of participants and obviously for our large photographic group. Some of these will have limited passenger capability so people can actually take a ride on the freight trains as well.

The primary reason we are putting together so many interesting freight trains, is in response to the needs of the dedicated photographic community who will be very well represented. If you would like to join that group on organised photographic excursions during the *Stars of Sandstone 2017* event, contact Rod Hering on E: [rodhering@gmail.com](mailto:rodhering@gmail.com) C: +27 (0)82 780 5110

If you are very lucky, you might be able to persuade the Guard to let you ride in the Guard Van – you can pretend you are an out of work person heading West to find fame and fortune?

*Photo credit: Rod Hering*

## AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE



*At Stars 2017, our tractors will be grouped by manufacturers' name. For example, here is a display of some of our Massey Ferguson tractors in the collection.*

### HANOMAG R545 AGRICULTURAL TRACTOR

Chris Wilson reports as follows:

Way back in the late 1970s, when I started my career in the tractor industry at Malcomess in Pietermaritzburg, I was fascinated to see somewhat ancient Hanomag tractors still being serviced and repaired in the workshop. These simple massively constructed old tractors were considered “bullet proof” and just seemed to keep on going. Most were R545s, rated at 59HP, but with considerable torque reserves, and had been first commissioned, as far as I can ascertain in the late 50s through to early 60s. Their biggest shortcoming was the absence of any 3-point hydraulic lift.

Hanomag as a company dates back to 1835, first building steam locomotives and then farm equipment in Hanover, Germany. They experimented with petrol cars as early as 1912, but this venture eventually led to financial trouble, and in the 1920s the Loco division was sold to Henschel. A more successful car line up and diesel tractors put them back into profitability, but the market crash of 1929 once again threatened the company, which had to be re-structured and bailed out by the Hannover City authorities.

Production during WW2 naturally turned to military vehicles; Hanomag being best known then for half-track troop carriers. Some 15 000 of these were built for the army, as well as many smaller 4x4 vehicles in a joint venture with BMW.

Hanomag is truly a brand for Sandstone, with deep roots in Steam Locomotion, Agriculture and Military.

In the late 60s Massey Ferguson were looking to increase their construction line up, and purchased Hanomag for this purpose. Agricultural tractor production ceased soon after. The truck division was taken over by Daimler Benz.

Sandstone has several Hanomags. An R545 is currently undergoing restoration. This tractor, complete, but obviously out of commission for many years, was eventually started with a lot of attention to the fuel, cooling system and lube system. The clutch was found to be totally worn out and probably the reason it was set aside.



### GARDENER'S CORNER

It is unusual to find roses growing alongside a grain-handling facility which is almost industrial by definition. At Sandstone, we try to soften our world as much as we can and there is nothing better than to plant roses.

A pleasant sight for the long distance grain haulage driver to see when he drive in....







*Planted in June, the wheat is developing very satisfactorily for harvesting in January 2017*

## MODERN FARMING

This is an integral part of Sandstone Estates' income generating capability. Visitors to **Stars 2017** should find lots to see and explore from a modern farming standpoint. We are planting 3000 hectares of white and yellow maize, soya beans and sunflowers. We took a chance and planted a wheat crop this winter, and that has paid off quite well with us having unexpected rains in August.

With over 700 cattle in our main herd, it was time that we upgraded the quality of our livestock management. We have appointed an experienced new professional, Tjaart Venter, who has arrived on the farm with his wife Valerie to do just that..

The farm has a much greater carrying capacity for livestock than is currently the case.

*Below, Our Equalizer Planter planting maize. This Planter can do 100 hectares a day on a double shift*



*Centre, newly planted maize has just germinated under thunderous skies, and below, Lagerplaats - two weeks later*



## OUR AFRIKANERS

Our Afrikaner cattle mean a lot to us. We are one of the few places in South Africa that breeds and trains old style Afrikaner oxen because they represent a big footprint on our Heritage landscape. To improve the blood line we purchased two very high quality Afrikaner bulls with outstanding traditional genetics. These bulls came from a breeder in Thabazimbi.



*Left, We have a large commercial herd of cross-bred cattle using Sussex, Senepol and Afrikaner Bulls. Photo credits: Tjaart Venter*

## ANIMAL DRAWN TRANSPORT

Mules, which were commonplace 50 years ago, are now very rare. We have four mules on the farm, two of which are young and they are currently in training. We are confident that they will be out every day during **Stars of Sandstone 2017**, pulling traditional wagons and possibly doing other work as well.

A mule is the offspring of a male donkey (jack) and a female horse (mare). Horses and donkeys are different species, with different numbers of chromosomes. Of the two F1 hybrids between these two species, a mule is easier to obtain than a hinny, which is the offspring of a female donkey (jenny) and a male horse (stallion).

The size of a mule and work to which it is put, depend largely on the breeding of the mule's female parent (dam). Mules can be lightweight, medium weight, or, when produced from draft horse mares, of moderately heavy weight. Mules are more patient, hardy and long-lived than horses, and are less obstinate and more intelligent than donkeys.

*Credit: Wikipedia*







## MILITARY VEHICLE CAVALCADE

Our traditional cavalcade of Military vehicles will take place at the Sandstone Heritage Trust during *Stars of Sandstone 2017*. We will showcase, as a surprise, a number of new items which have never been seen before.

The Armour Museum in Bloemfontein has applied for the necessary authority to participate and we are eagerly looking forward to a successful outcome to that application.

There are over 40 Military Vehicles based at the Sandstone Estates and the number grows steadily. Some people have been following the restoration of the special ex-WW2 Marmon Herrington Mk 4 which is almost complete (see link for this in below article).

Not surprisingly, Andy Selfe has taken the back-up vehicle which we sent down for spares, and has restored that as a non-runner which will make a useful addition to our Military trains.

Interest in steam tends to be dominant but there are plenty of Military Vehicle enthusiasts out there, and they need to make themselves known to us so we can recruit them as drivers and participants in our Military convoys.

Our tanks and heavy Armour are always a hit with the younger generation.

## MARMON HERRINGTON MK 4 ARMoured CAR FROM WW2

Andy Selfe has basically completed the restoration. See: <http://armouredcarmk4.blogspot.co.uk/>. You may ask why we went to the trouble to find one and repair it. The picture on the left shows a German soldier with a captured Mk 2 or 3 Marmon Herrington Armoured Car which was designed and built in South Africa.

Germans were not averse to using captured enemy vehicles and pressing them into action. In fact, many French tanks that had been captured as early as May 1940 were to face Shermans and Churchills in Normandy in 1944. This photograph would appear to feature a Marmon Herrington armoured car. It was one of the most commonly used vehicles in British armoured car units until at least 1942. In fact, there were around 1200 of them in service. The armoured car was still seen as late as May 1943, and some units even used them in Italy. The British would later also use them in Malaya, and the South Africans were particularly keen on this vehicle, with a fleet of 4500 of their own. The vehicle itself came from an American car manufacturer known as the Marmon Car Company. In the early 1930s, a Colonel Arthur Herrington joined the company as an engineer and they began developing military vehicles. In addition to the British and South Africans using the vehicle, they were also used by New Zealanders and the Free Greeks, French and Poles. Understandably, given the fluid nature of the desert warfare, a considerable number of them were captured by the Germans, who were all too happy to press them into service.

*A parade of 24 x Marmon Herrington Mk4s (1st & 2nd Pretoria Regiments) as part of Jan Smuts' funeral procession on 15 September 1950, in Pretoria. It is of particular interest as it shows Andy how the Registration Numbers were painted on the nose cones. Photo kindly supplied by Hencoe Hunter.*







Please direct all Classic Car enquiries to Dave Richardson, E: [daver@sandstone.co.za](mailto:daver@sandstone.co.za) or C: +27 (0) 82 447 9167

We are encouraged by the number of enquiries from people who want to bring their very special vehicles to *Stars of Sandstone 2017*.

We have told Earl Don, the owner of the purple Chevy on the left, that our Cosmos is a better match for his vehicle and to relocate it to Sandstone!

The primary role of our classic vehicles is to accompany the trains, so that passengers get to see them in their 1900s environment, but also so that the photographers have an opportunity to capture a much more interesting scene than just a train by itself in the middle of the countryside. This setting the scene of course, is further supplemented by our oxen, horse drawn vehicles, traction engines, implements and old commercial vehicles.

*Stars of Sandstone 2017* will obviously be a photographer's delight!



1930 Model A Ford



1934 Chevrolet sedan



1947 MG TC



1931 Model B Ford



1950 Ford F100



1935 Ford V8 Pick Up totally original since new



1927 Chevrolet Fire Engine ex Kroonstad Fire Dept

## SOME OF SANDSTONE'S OWN CLASSIC VEHICLES

## CLASSIC TRUCKS

We love old trucks and we are currently working hard to make sure that they are rejuvenated and feeling sprightly for the *Stars* event in March. There is nothing like a testosterone injection to get an old bloke moving!

These two are receiving some TLC: on the left, a Ford 3 tonner with the fuel tank out

On the right, a Chev stake side under repair







Like many farms and businesses, our technical staff are the backbone of the operation because nothing moves without them. We applaud their efforts and dedication.

## TUMELO MOHALA

Tumelo Mohala is one of our most experienced Heavy Machinery operators. Our operators are trained to check their own machines constantly. Due to the exchange rate, a tractor like this can cost up to ZAR3 million and has to be looked after. On the left, Tumelo is checking his tractor (MX 335) before going out to the lands to do ripping. Ripping mechanically breaks up compacted soil layers before planting, increases soil drainage and allows water to infiltrate at a faster rate. It also assists with soil aeration, which helps break down organic matter and provides plant roots with plenty of oxygen. Tumelo is one of our senior Arable Farm guys who has a good understanding of modern farming methods.

Tumelo has been with the company almost since its inception in the mid-1990s, despite him looking so youthful! Tumelo is utterly reliable in all respects.



## RICO VILJOEN

Our main workshops literally never sleep. In-between emergency breakdowns and so on, Rico Viljoen has been sorting out and restoring a classic MF135 tractor.

Although these are classic tractors in every way, they are also totally useable on a day-to-day basis. We try to use such vehicles for their intended function.



## SANDSTONE ESTATES SUPPORTS LOCAL COMMUNITY SOCCER INITIATIVE

A group of international visitors who spent a few days with us earlier this year have advised that they will be sponsoring six local soccer teams. This will include the provision of soccer jerseys, balls, boots and other accessories for the ladies' and men's soccer teams. The teams are made up of the employees of different farms in the area, including Sandstone, and the sponsorship extends to our neighbours as well.

We are very heartened by the tremendous generosity that we experience from many of our visitors. The farm employs nearly 100 people and that obviously has a beneficial effect in terms of providing income to the local community. Obviously the people in direct employment are quite a small percentage of the population, and an outreach programme like this which supports soccer, reaches almost everyone living in our particular part of the Eastern Free State. It has been interesting and heartening to see how enthusiastically the ladies in particular have embraced soccer as a sport.

*As often happens at the Sandstone, our old classic Heritage items are brought out to play — in this case, our wonderful old 1973 Leyland Albion is deployed and it is reliable as ever. Not bad for 43 years old!*

*Franschhoek, Saturday, 29 October 2016, which Sandstone United won 4-0. Sandstone United Ladies (in blue) and Franschhoek Ladies (in red)*





The overseas Railway Media, particularly in Britain, is very generous in their coverage of Sandstone's achievements:

Below, *The Railway Magazine* featured both the NG10 and the 15F, and our NGG11 featured in a recent issue of the magazine *Narrow Gauge World* (below)

## Steam restoration makes progress in South Africa

THE Sandstone Heritage Trust in South Africa has begun the restoration of the sole surviving NG10 class narrow gauge (610mm gauge) Pacific No. 61 (Baldwin 42633/1915). It was constructed by US firm Baldwin during the First World War when British builders were unable to supply locos to the now-disused 610mm-gauge Avontuur Railway, between Port Elizabeth and Avontuur, because of the war effort. Two classes of locomotive were built by Baldwin: the 'NG9' was a 4-6-0, while the 'NG10' was a 4-6-2. Baldwin had already supplied three narrow gauge locos to South Africa in 1902, with a further one in 1911. These earlier locos are generally referred to as Class 'NG7' and were 2-6-0s. Unlike the 'NG9', the 'NG10' was much more stable in reverse with its rear pony truck, and could operate at a higher speed, making its usage much

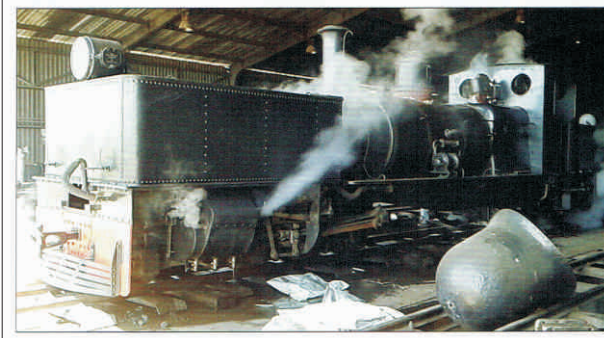
more flexible. The 'NG9' had a tendency to derail at speeds of more than 10mph when operating in reverse. The 'NG10s' survived until 1962. Two locomotives – Numbers 63 and 64 – spent their last days in South West Africa (now Namibia), but gauge conversion there led to their demise. Number 61 was put aside for preservation and given a cosmetic overhaul in the 1960s, and exhibited at the Narrow Gauge Museum at Humewood Road, Port Elizabeth until it closed. The loco was then stored at the nearby diesel depot, but 40 years in the salty seaside air had led to serious corrosion problems. To prevent further deterioration the locomotive was moved in 2006 to Sandstone's facility at Bloemfontein and stripped for assessment. Initially, the boiler was seemingly beyond repair, but further recent examination has revealed that it can be rebuilt, and in September 2016



Class 'NG10' No. 61 at Humewood Road Depot, Port Elizabeth, prior to withdrawal in the early 1960s. LEITH PAXTON

the boiler was sent to a specialist engineering firm for rebuilding. The tender is also badly wasted and a new one will be built from scratch as the frames are also badly rusted. Another similar locomotive, on the Brecon Mountain Railway in Wales, is sometimes referred to as an 'NG10', but this was built by Baldwin in 1930, albeit

to a similar design, to operate trains on the EPPC line in Port Elizabeth from Chelsea, on the Avontuur line, to the EPPC cement works in Port Elizabeth, carrying limestone. It has been restored to its original condition in Wales with three domes and a smaller tender, having been modified during its time with EPPC.



■ It lives! This is the moment that every locomotive restorer dreams of when a fire is lit for the first time and the project comes alive, often after many years of effort. The loco in question is NG611 Garratt no 52, built by Beyer Peacock in 1919 for work in Natal, South Africa, sold to Rustenburg Platinum Mines in 1956 and after retirement, preserved at the Museum of Man and Science in Johannesburg in 1974, passing through a couple of other owners, before finally being acquired by Sandstone Estates in 2010. Restoration has been going on ever since and the loco was steamed on 28th September. Next stop, a starring role in the Stars of Sandstone event in April 2017. Many thanks to Dave Richardson of the Sandstone Heritage Trust for the photo.

## THERE IS A SANDSTONE IN AUSTRALIA?

Terry Boardman sent us a link to a branch line in Australia called Sandstone – see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandstone\\_Branch\\_Railway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandstone_Branch_Railway)

Graham Black also sent us the following: "I have been through Sandstone when travelling from Kalgoorlie to Port Headland in the early 1970s. Clean forgot there was a town called Sandstone in Aus."

It looks like an interesting place and it has a railway!

## New home for 3052 Avril

THE 15F Class loco owned by renowned British painter David Shepherd has found a new home at Friends of the Rail (FOTR) in Hermannstad, Pretoria. The move was successfully brokered by South African national preservation co-ordinator FEDRAIL SA. The loco has been moved from Reefstamers in Johannesburg where the locomotive had been recently rebuilt, on behalf of

Sandstone Heritage Trust, which act as local custodians for the loco. 15F Class 3052 Avril will be used by FOTR to alleviate a critical shortage of motive power at the Pretoria operator, caused by the overhaul of 15F Class 2650, and will enable FOTR to run larger trains on their weekend trips to Cullinan. Our thanks to Sandstone Heritage Trust for much of the information in this article and the other item (top).



15F Class 3052 drifts through Olifantsfontein, north of Johannesburg, on August 28 on its way to Pretoria. DAVE RICHARDSON

## STARS OF SANDSTONE 2017

Tilly Smith-Dix, our wonderful PRO, is doing a great job of publicising *Stars 2017* worldwide. Here are some links:

<http://mypr.co.za/full-steam-ahead-for-stars-of-sandstone-2017-in-south-africa/>  
<http://myjhb.co.za/full-steam-ahead-for-stars-of-sandstone-2017-in-south-africa/>

## INTERESTING DOCUMENTARY ON STARS 2017 APPEARS ON GERMAN TELEVISION

For those who have never been to Sandstone, click on this link:

<http://www.ardmediathek.de/tv/Eisenbahn-Romantik/Stars-of-Sandstone/SWR-Fernsehen/Video?bcastId=1100776&documentId=38039790>

It is a short documentary on our 2014 event, which appeared on German Television recently. It will certainly provide a glimpse of what to expect in 2017 although, as always, our *Stars of Sandstone* programme does change year to year.



## DO STOP BY AND VISIT US ANYTIME

Large groups are welcome to visit Sandstone, as are clubs, families and enthusiasts.

Recently, the RSG 4x4 Club came to spend some time with us. They enjoyed a train trip around the full circuit, and after lunch Seun took them on a walking tour of all Heritage items. Francois Rossouw and his team said they would be back next year.

To arrange a visit of your own, contact Leigh Sanders on E: [leighs@sandstone.co.za](mailto:leighs@sandstone.co.za) or T: +27 (0)51 9332235.



**Southkop** is a very historical and famous landmark in the history of South Africa. It is located on the farm Sekonyela and can be seen very clearly from the Sandstone Narrow Gauge Railway running through Vailima.

Photo credit: Jack Sorour

**From all of us at Sandstone — THAT'S ALL FOR THIS ISSUE! Less than 130 days to go...**

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