



Stars of Sandstone

NEWSLETTER NO: IV

30TH MARCH — 9TH APRIL 2017

We are often asked "What's the purpose of this Newsletter?" Essentially, it is to promote our next big Expo at Sandstone Estates in the Eastern Free State (South Africa) which will take place in 2017. By sharing our ongoing activities with prospective visitors to the show, they are able to develop an insight into what they can expect to see. In addition, the many thousands of people that have been to visit us in the past are able to follow the progress of the restoration of items that they may have seen previously in an unrestored state.

Perhaps one of the most important functions, is to provide people who will never have the opportunity to visit us, to have a virtual insight into what we are doing. We often receive letters and even donations from elderly people who have retired but who no longer travel. That does not in any way diminish their interest, and we love to hear from them and to take advantage of their knowledge and expertise in many instances. So please do not hesitate to communicate with us.

Our decision to not have a show in 2016 was a good one. We are pleased that a number of leading travel companies, particularly in the Railway sector, will be sending groups to Stars 2017. Each group has its own requirements and we will appoint a liaison person to each group to make sure that they achieve their objectives. Please bear in mind that accommodation in the Eastern Free State is relatively limited, so the sooner one books the sooner one secures a place. For a copy of our accommodation guide for the area, please e-mail your request to Alina Halaf: E: alinah@sandstone.co.za

SANDSTONE ESTATES THE VENUE FOR STARS OF SANDSTONE 2017



We have opened the attendance bookings for Stars of Sandstone 2017 on our website. The level of interest is much higher than in previous years, and as a result, we are working hard to expand the event in terms of how many people we can accommodate and also our facilities.

Our whole approach is to treat Military, Aviation, Railways, Agriculture, Classic Cars, old Trucks and Buses, Stationary Engines and other groups as being individually holistic within a bigger picture. Not only would one be able to look at a very good working cross-section of items in that category, but one could then enjoy seeing them co-exist with everything else. Where we are probably unique in the world, is you could sit on a train and watch tractors, steam lorries, traction engines, classic cars, vintage tractors, people on bicycles or on foot wandering along the road alongside the track. People need to wave to each other more and they need to hug each other more, and those opportunities will certainly abound at *Stars of Sandstone 2017*.

Many people ask the question – may I bring my classic car with me? The answer is a definitive YES! We are not short of exhibits by any means, but it takes the burden off us if someone brings their own item, participates in the event, and simply looks after their pride and joy for the enjoyment of others. Our biggest limitation has been and always will be, the number of qualified volunteers that we can attract. We still have a severe problem with our Steam Traction Engine collection due to lack of experienced people being available to operate them. We are looking for overseas people with experience who like to bring their overalls with them and adopt a traction engine for the event.



Motor Vehicles

THE PEERLESS TRUCK

Visitors to Stars 2015 will recall that the 1914 Peerless Truck was only able to operate for a short time during the event, as the front wheels were collapsing and shedding the solid rubber tyres. Professor Erik Holm mentioned in our Ox Wagon rebuild story has also managed to restore the two front wheels of the Peerless.



*The Peerless Truck at Stars of Sandstone 2014.
The solid rubber tyres can be seen clearly in this picture
by David Benn.*

The original solid tyres were bonded to the wheels and we are looking for someone who can do this so we may literally get the Peerless back on the road. If you know of any such companies or restorers who can complete this job, we would be pleased to hear from you. Please email Dave Richardson on daver@sandstone.co.za with any suggestions.

*Erik Holm with one of the restored
Peerless Wheels.*

THE MG TC – PROGRESS

Following on from our report from Tom Kirkland in the last newsletter, the restoration of the TC is moving forward. Tom Kirkland reports on the work done on the steering column:

My friend Jack Lewthwaite has had the TC's Steering Column to work on. He needed to take up some slack on the steering shaft which is operated by the Worm Gear. We were not able to get a new one which was listed on one of the first lists which I sent in. It would have been in the batch of spares which I received while at Sandstone in April. We were then told that those parts were no longer available.

Hence it is only recently that he has attempted to do the machining on it. He has made a special tool and has bored out the casting ever so slightly; the shaft has now been trued up, and has been Hard Chromed, and again turned down to an exact fit.

We stripped the Steering Column in order to fit the new shaft. Only to find there are two small Ball Races at the bottom of the column. The one had totally disintegrated, and the other is showing signs of wear. These fit above and below the Worm Gear (that may have caused the wear on the shaft which he has repaired). It was not for the want of grease, as the whole inner steering column was stuffed with grease and took a lot of cleaning out.

A number of spares have arrived from the UK recently but we are now ordering these two bearings to complete the column. Jack and I are certainly doing some remarkable work on this car despite the lack of available parts.

*The original manufacturer's plates display
the provenance of the TC.*



*The dashboard is being rewired but awaits the fitment
of the steering column.*



NEW ARRIVALS

It really is Christmas at Sandstone as we have three new arrivals from overseas for our collection. They are a 1915 Titan Tractor from Canada (see under Agricultural Machines in this edition), a Russian-made IMZ-Ural WW2 motorcycle from Poland and the 1907 International Farm Buggy featured in Newsletter 2. Sandstone shipped it to the UK as an entrant in the London to Brighton Race a few years ago but discovered it was a year too young.



The 1907 IH Farm Buggy



This Russian-made IMZ-Ural we received from Poland has its origins in WW2 when Joseph Stalin ordered the Russian military to prepare for a ground invasion from Nazi Germany.

Part of the planning was for a motorcycle and sidecar. In a surprising twist, Germany had provided Soviet Russia in 1939 with a number of late 1930s BMW R71 motorcycles as part of a non-aggression pact in 1939, which suited the Soviet Army's requirements perfectly. In Moscow, Soviet engineers dismantled the BMW and reverse engineered the design, enabling the motorcycles to be built in Moscow.

In 1941, the first prototypes were shown to Stalin and named the M-72. The design was approved and production authorised. However, fearing air attack in Moscow, the factory was moved east to the edge of Siberia at Irbit in the Ural Mountains.

Established in an old brewery, the first motorcycle was produced on October 25th 1942 and during World War 2, a total of 9799 M-72 machines were produced for reconnaissance and mobile troops.



Seen here prior to restoration began

Andy Selfe has been progressing at a pace with this Armoured Car project.

Click on the link below to view the latest progress.

<http://www.sandstone-estates.com/index.php/military-vehicles-59/40-military-vehicles/2930-marmon-herrington-armoured-car-goes-for-restoration>

Marmon-Herrington MKIV Armoured Car



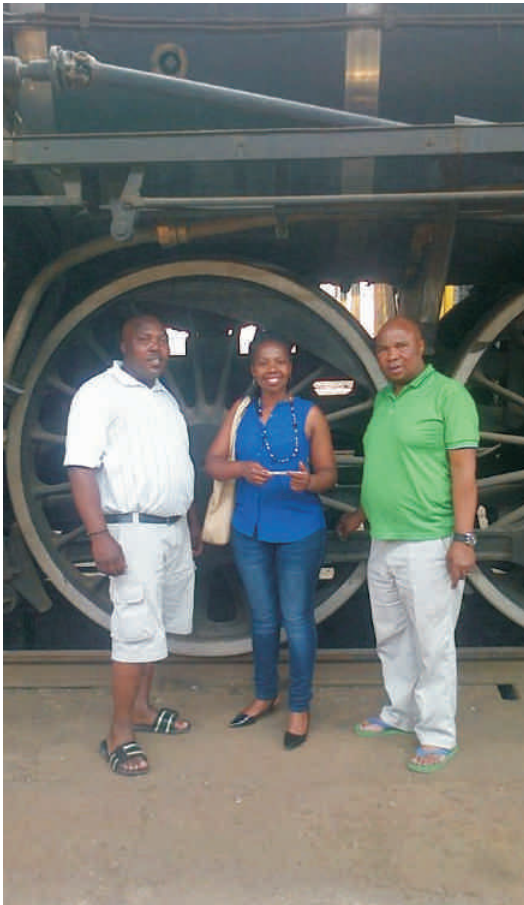
Andy at work during the restoration

RAISING THE BAR

Another of our preservation projects that will enhance our collection for the 2017 event is our Leyland Bus, now progressing nicely. We have acquired some ex SAR railway coach seats to fit in to the bus which is having its floor replaced by our carpenter, Ben, as seen below:



ENGAGING WITH THE FREE STATE GOVERNMENT



*From left to right:
Lefu Sellane, Alina Halafu (Sandstone Estates)
and Molapisi Sellane*

We have recently been holding meetings with the Free State Government, particularly Free State Tourism to engage them in promoting Sandstone as a tourist attraction and also our *Stars of Sandstone 2017* event.

Our meetings have been proving fruitful and our delegation is shown below after the meeting while visiting Lukas Nel at the Sandstone facility in Bloemfontein.

FOWLER PLOUGHING ENGINES



One of a pair of Fowler Ploughing Engines at Sandstone

Amongst the equipment rescued from Midmar in the late 90s along with the 2ft narrow gauge railway items, were two Fowler Steam Ploughing engines which have been safely in storage at Sandstone since then. Richard Otto, who now lives in the UK, wrote to us recently as they were originally used on his family's farm near Pietermaritzburg.

"I have been trying to track down 2 Fowler steam ploughs that were imported from England by my family in about 1910. I last saw them at Midmar Historical Village before it was closed down in 1997. They were used at the family farms at Otto's Bluff near Pietermaritzburg and stood for many years in old sheds - one was then taken on by the Natal Museum before both went to Midmar.

If you have any knowledge of their whereabouts, I would be very pleased to hear of them.

Best wishes,

Richard Otto"



*Richard Otto and his family pictured in 1991
with the Fowler at Midmar Historical Village*

We were happy to hear from Richard and have sent him some pictures of them safe and sound at Sandstone. Although they may not be restored for some time, Richard has been very helpful in researching their history via various sources in the UK. Richard and his family hope to visit Sandstone at the Stars event in 2017 to be reunited with the two engines.

Agricultural Machines



This veteran Ransome, Simms & Jefferies threshing machine has been donated to Sandstone by Elizabeth Pienaar. Our thanks to Elizabeth for adding this to our collection. The unit is currently being inspected with a view to bring it back to full working order for Stars 2017.



DONATING OLD ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT

We are receiving an unprecedented number of requests to acquire items that people no longer need. These include tractors, military vehicles, stationary engines, farm implements etc. We are not dealers and therefore we do not trade in these items at all. However, we do have a big site and we can accommodate additional items, but to be honest, we are not that far from saturation.

We now take the approach that we will not use our scarce resources to pay premiums for anything. The kindest thing people can do is to donate items to us because we have the experience of collecting them, which is often considerable, and looking after them in perpetuity. We do appreciate that there is not an entrenched government Heritage policy, either at the Provincial or National Government level, that can accommodate items like old ox wagons etc. going back hundreds of years, and although we are happy to fulfil that role, the donors must be sensitive to the fact that, to some extent, their burden of ownership then becomes our burden.

Notwithstanding the above, we maintain a panglossian view of our activities and of our future and of our immediate environment. We represent a part of the private sector that is not supported in any way by Government and to a large extent, to the rest of the private sector. We do hope to engage with both these groups more actively in the future. We will probably produce half a dozen more newsletters before our 2017 event, so use it as a forum to communicate not only with us, but with like-minded people throughout the world.

NEW ARRIVAL: 1915 TITAN TRACTOR

We shall feature an article by Chris Wilson in the next edition on the background of the Titan Tractor brand, which was built by International Harvester and was essentially their first commercially successful tractor back in the early 1900s.

WHAT PART, COINCIDENCE?

Very often, coincidence plays a part in Preservation. Many years ago, a 1910 Marshall Colonial Agricultural Traction engine was shipped to the UK. It had been restored by railway apprentices and was on display in Colenso in Natal. Mysteriously it disappeared, and reappeared in the UK.

The Sandstone Heritage Trust tracked its progress and eventually it went into a private collection in Somerset. We had a good relationship with the collector and he agreed after some discussions to relinquish it so it could come back to South Africa where it had been since new.

However, what is also interesting, is that it was supplied new by the agricultural machinery agents E.F. Ford in Pietermaritzburg. A sign has just surfaced which has kindly been loaned to us by a private collector and which we were able to photograph. If you look closely at the pictures there were some very interesting Marshall products.

Marshall & Sons of Gainsborough were top class engineers producing the highest quality products. They of course were also the creator of the world famous Field Marshall range of tractors, as well as the very rare and sought after MP6. Sandstone has a good representative cross-section of Field Marshall tractors.



As an aside, if you have old signs, farming related or not, please consider letting us have them because we use them to decorate the inside of our substantial storage sheds.

THE WATERLOO BOY TRACTOR RESTORATION

Report & pictures by Chris Wilson.

Amongst the multitude of tractors in the Sandstone Heritage collection are a number that stand out amongst the rest in terms of age, rarity, uniqueness of design, or the fact that they represented a major step in tractor development. One that qualifies on all these points, is surely the 1924 Waterloo Boy Model N.

The Waterloo Gasoline Engine Company had an established name in engines and had dabbled in tractors by the turn of the century, but in 1914 achieved success with their Model R tractor. The R was upgraded to the Model N in 1917, the principal difference being a 2-speed gear box instead of the single speed R transmission.

John Deere, a formidable name in farm implements and harvesting equipment, had at this stage made no real effort to get into the growing tractor market. In 1918, satisfied that tractors were where the future lay, Deere looked around for a successful partner, and so bought out the Waterloo Company. In so doing, they inherited a design feature that was to endure in all JD tractors until 1960 – the 2-cylinder engine.

The Model N then was John Deere's first successful tractor. Altogether 31 000 Model R/Ns were produced, a good number for those days. In 1922, Deere launched the Model D from the Waterloo (Iowa) factory, the first to bear the John Deere name, and so successful it remained in production until the early 50s. Thus the Waterloo Boy was the progenitor of the global number one tractor company we know today as John Deere.

Sandstone's Model N bears serial number 30099, making it one of the last to be built, by which time the Model D had already been out for some time.

It is unlikely any W Boys came originally to S Africa; one was however imported into Southern Rhodesia and was exhibited at the Rand Show in the 1960s, but returned. To fill this historic gap, tractor 30099 was purchased from Oscars Dreamland, a huge collection in Nebraska that was sold off in the 90s.

It was coaxed into running condition for the Great 100 event, and later work was done cosmetically and mechanically to enable it to be exhibited at various shows. Recently however, it started overheating and it was decided to investigate.

Since the water pump was leaking badly, attention started there, but fortunately, apart from the gland, the pump is in good shape. The radiator was clean, so it began to look as if the problem lay within the engine itself. That there was considerable wear within was evident from the heavy vapour issuing from the breather, and as always on an engine of this age, opening up can lead to a can of worms.

Nevertheless, the cylinder head was removed. Evidence of blowing of the gasket from a cylinder into a water port accounted for the overheating. But of course once opened, other deterioration was discovered.

There is no effective air filtration system on the tractor, so dust is sucked into the engine in considerable amounts. The valve stems, springs, tappets etc operate in the open, also exposed to dust. This has led to huge wear in the valves themselves. Having gone this far it was decided to check the rings, and the pistons were removed. Naturally both rings and piston lands were badly worn.

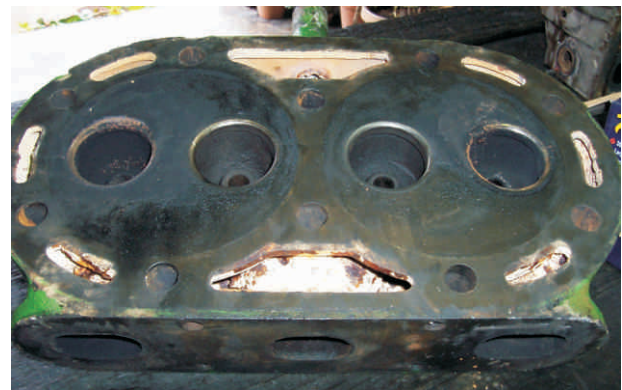
Competent people are available to make new valves and overhaul the head, and the correct steel has been located. Similarly, rings can be manufactured. The pistons will be machined out and new rings made to wider specs to overcome the considerable wear in the grooves. Gaskets will be made by a specialist.

The cylinder bore is not too badly worn. Re-sleeving this would entail considerable expense, as sleeve material of this diameter (6,5") is not commercially available, and new sleeves would have to be turned out of solid iron.

There are other items to consider; the governor needs attention, the fuel system needs a good clean, but work is progressing.



Removal of the head is relatively easy.



The Cylinder Head valve seats which can be re-cut.



The Valves themselves, worn beyond redemption



Access to the big ends is easy from a cover. White metal bearings are good, but will need careful shimming on re-fitment.

OUR NEW OX WAGON — the Symond's Wagon



Fitting the steel types to the wheels



Erik Holm checking a component



Here, Klaus is carefully applying the finer detail

Pictures: Erik Holm



The Symond's Wagon as it arrived, and brothers Erik and Klaus Holm with the completed Wagon



A FASCINATING FARM RESTORATION

We have acquired this homemade, probably animal drawn wagon, which is believed to be about 120 years old. The front axle is damaged which can be repaired and we will replace the corrugated iron sheeting with wood to restore its appearance to what it was so many years ago. We will keep you updated on this one. It is truly amazing what can be found around our beautiful country.

We recently acquired this wagon, and master restorer of these items, Professor Erik Holm, describes the history of these wagons and its restoration.

Buckwagons ("Bokwaens") were ox wagons built since about 1865 and quickly replaced the pioneer "Kakebeenwa" which was developed over the previous two centuries. You could order your buckwagon as "Kaalwa" (literally "naked" wagon – like this one) with a half tent (also called a "Transportwa", or with a full tent ("Reiswa" of "nagmaalwa").

Two sizes were popular, a small 14 foot entry model and an 18 foot heavy wagon, loading up to 7 tonnes and pulled by 16 -18 oxen. As roads improved, wagon wheels got smaller, eventually making the metal grid over the rear wheels unnecessary. This wagon is one of these small wheeled "straight rail" wagons.

The manufacturer

R Symons was a Scotsman who started his wagon works in King Williams town in 1878. His wagons were famous for their craftsmanship, and he specialised in wagons unlike most wagon works which also built horse carts and horse wagons. This wagon predates 1879 –the date on the front axle – which is already a replacement. The rear axle is made by Oldbury (Symons preferred provider) but the date is unfortunately worn away. Symons' factory was called the "Buffalo Wagon and Carriage Works" of which I have seen wagons built as late as 1934.

Identifying features of Symons wagons are the large rivets binding the "agtertang" and the square plate on the hook on the side of buck beam. This particular wagon shows several old fashioned features corroborating its age. The "W" icons holding the buck beams in position on the "agtertang" are bolted with brackets to the sides of beams, not to the bottom as in later wagons. The brake is the "cape" or "dewrgooirein" type, later replaced by the crank type. The "voortang" is also the older "cape" – type, not the later "tolletjiesfang".

The restoration

As can be expected in such an old wagon it had been worked on a lot, apart from the front axle and wheels, several of the rear wheels felloes and spokes are replacements. The floor and railing board were probably replaced several times. More recently it was rebuilt for looks – inappropriate wheel grids were added and the buck beams and "lawgwa" spliced with softwood. Quite pretty paintwork was done, but unfortunately withered away again. Our restoration aimed at retaining as much as possible of the original while restoring the wagon to its former glory and a "roadworthy" state. We had to replace the buckbeams and langwa (with bluegum) and floorboards (with pine – originally Oregon). Ten Felloes were replaced with mahogany and ten spokes with original assegai. The ornamental paintwork was done in oil paints, and given much attention by wagon makers.

Each wagon works had its own craftsmen and style, often in a trade mark recognizable pattern over decades, Klaus Schaer repainted this wagon in the style we found on the few surviving Symons Wagons with original paintwork.

It's all about Locos



No.6, O&K 12140 at Tentativa in October 1969, and the very same loco at Bloemfontein in 2015 after painting
Picture courtesy of **Jeff Lanham**

The restoration team. Lukas Nel with (Left to Right),
Tinus, Jeandre and Izak with O&K 11112 "Ermyntrede".



MORE ABOUT THE O&Ks

Our latest two fully restored O&K locomotives featured in the last edition attracted a lot of attention and we were privileged to make contact with Jeff Lanham, now resident in France, who photographed these and other locos at Caxito in Angola in 1969. Such photographs are very rare, and even in 1969, the security situation at Caxito, north-east of Luanda, was precarious. As Jeff commented, it was a case of in and out very quickly in daylight!

No: 5, O&K 11112 at Tentativa in October 1969.
Picture courtesy of **Jeff Lanham**



NARROW GAUGE REPORT

For a detailed report on the activities at our Narrow Gauge running shed, click on this link:
http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/stories/general/20151214/Week_report_10_dec_20153_compressed.pdf

PORT ELIZABETH WAGONS

Y No: 2028, before and after



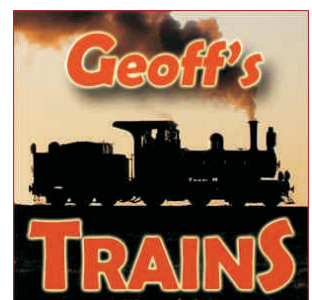
The first of our wagons collected in August in our recent purchases from Port Elizabeth, Y wagon No:2028, has been successfully restored by Wouter Jubileus and his team at the Hoekfontein workshop. Our trucks will be operating constantly between now and March 2016 before this current consignment is located to Sandstone.



GEOFF'S TRAINS SOUTH AFRICA 2017

UK Rail Tour Operator, Geoff Cooke, is planning a tour to South Africa in 2017 to coincide with *Stars of Sandstone 2017*. Click on the link for his latest news.

<http://us8.campaign-archive2.com/?u=fafa26832a0c047a5957fc31e&id=7e3d9ca189&e=0c74233fa7>



REUNITED WITH LYNDIE-LOU

At the recent Reefsteamers Open Day Mrs Lyndie Mole was on the footplate of her locomotive, GMAM 4079 "Lyndie Lou". The locomotive was the first acquired by the Sandstone Heritage Trust in 1997 from Randfontein Estates Gold Mines. There it was originally numbered R15 then R1 and named "Wendy". It was renamed "Lyndie Lou" and took its original SAR number when handed over at a ceremony at the mine.



"I don't believe this. I wonder if Lukas Nel will really be able to restore it?"

— Submitted with thanks by John Talbot, Boscombe, UK.



4079 in its original blue Sandstone Steam Railroad livery on a test run at REGM in 1997.

THE SIMMER & JACK LOCOMOTIVES

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 led 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 in Scotland near to 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. Numbers 1 & 2 were built by HK Porter of Pittsburgh, USA in 1896 and were 2-6-2 tank locomotives. They were followed by Number 3 of a similar design, being a Porter 15"x20" model, in 1902. (Porter 2443/1902)



Porter No: 3 in service still with its original cab. And here, as rescued from the old Simmer & Jack Mine
Picture from the **Dave Parsons Collection**

One of the wooden framed hoppers recovered from the S&J, complete with its own garden after 50 years!
Picture by **Dave Richardson**



1 & 2 were sadly scrapped in 1987/88 along with Number 4 which was an ex-SAR A class tank.

Number 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 Zambesi Sawmills Railway in Zambia, before returning to Simmer & Jack in 1921.

Number 6 also survives being a NBL 2-6-2T (NBL 26242/48). After years of display and then being dumped, the final 2 survivors on the mine, numbers 3 and 6 have been 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, in fact plans are now underway to look at restoring Porter No: 3. 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 number 3 is probably the only surviving Porter in South Africa 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 have also been acquired from the Simmer & Jack and will be cosmetically restored along with the two locomotives.

Their move into safe preservation is a significant milestone for Sandstone.

Seen around Sandstone

TWO CAPABLE SANDSTONE WOMEN



*Lillian Kepa and Leigh Sanders
in the Groenspan Store*

Leigh Sanders is our Administrative Manager at Sandstone and is the first point of contact for most visitors to the farm. She is responsible for the day to day administration of the farm and interacts with almost everyone as well as visitors.

Lillian Kepa is in physical charge of the many stores on the farm. As you can imagine the number of items in the stores is quite extensive but Lillian has quickly mastered the computer system set up by Alina Halafu, whom she reports to, and the stores are running smoothly.

SANDSTONE MARATHON-DRIVING CREW



Thabiso and Petrus with the Freightliner and low bed complete with two C wagons from Port Elizabeth.

Collecting our wagons purchased from the Port Elizabeth-Avontuur line is a massive logistics exercise, ably handled by the driver of our Freightliner truck and low bed, Thabiso Makgetha, ably assisted by Petrus Maphutse. This 2-man crew will make 27 trips to the area to collect the 37 wagons purchased and will drive over 50,000 kilometres to achieve this.

To date, 16 wagons have been collected and 21 are still to follow. However, another offer has been made for even more wagons, so there will be no end to these journeys for the time being. Some of the wagons can be double-stacked safely on the low bed such as C or DZ types, but other trips can only fetch one wagon at a time for height and/or weight reasons, examples are Y wagons and box van types.

With strict road ordinances on such loads, Thabiso and Petrus have an exemplary record of safety and knowledge of rigging to ensure a safe journey.



Loading a single Y wagon at Loerie

MODERN FARMING AT SANDSTONE

As most people know, we have had no rain on the farm now for nearly 9-months which means that our winter wheat has been hammered through lack of rain and we stopped planting summer crops after putting in only 10% of the 2,500 ha that had been planned.



*Bear in mind that this wheat has had almost no rain.
There is a crop there, but probably only
20% of the normal yield.*



*Due to reasonable ground moisture, our soyas have
now come up but they are in desperate need of rain.
The same applies to the white maize which we
planted at the end of October.*



*Our JD 1780 planter in action,
planting soyas in the dust.*



*The Equalizer 18 row planter. Unfortunately,
after planting only 200 hectares we had to stop.*

This will cost Sandstone Estates in excess of R20 million this year in lost revenue, so it is going to be tight. Nonetheless, we do live in a dry country and we did partially anticipate what was happening and we do have reserves. We are fortunate that we have not had to sell any cattle, but the weather authorities say that we can basically not expect rain until March now. Ironically, that is another good reason why a 2016 show is not a good idea, as the farm would not have looked nearly as good as it has in previous years.

The Sandstone Heritage Trust is one of the first Railway Preservation Groups to sign up to join the new Industry Federation organisation known as Fedrail SA.

As mentioned in Newsletter 3, SA has long needed a well run and dynamic umbrella organisation to liaise with Transnet, The Dept of Tourism and many other Parastatals or relevant State structures.

Major participants in South Africa's Railway Heritage and Tourism sector have combined forces to initiate the creation of a new railway heritage industry representative body, and to this end, the Federation of Heritage Railways of Southern Africa (FEDRAIL SA) has been established.

FEDRAIL SA has been formed in order to link and unify the Railway Preservation community in Southern Africa. It also seeks to establish ties with like-minded federations around the world to enhance and promote their achievements to the broader public and to provide a voice for Southern African organisations on the local and international stage. FEDRAIL SA's objective is



to serve its members for the purpose of expanding the sector and supporting the development of operators, interest groups and railway associations. FEDRAIL SA will also provide an advisory service to state railway organisations, operators, interest groups and railway associations.

FEDRAIL SA is not a regulatory body. It is a liaison body designed to further the interests of its members in a positive way and to act for them at the highest level. The authorities have clearly indicated that they need a single voice promoting the development of the Railway Heritage industry which has come into being as a result of a creative democratic process. It is not the function of FEDRAIL to prescribe to its members but it will keep them informed of the regulations that they need to comply with as required by regulatory authorities such as the

Rail Safety Regulator of South Africa as an example.

The Board of FEDRAIL SA comprises John Middleton, who will provide an international liaison function, Lawrence Clayton, Dennis Edgar, the Chairman of Reefsteamers, South Africa's largest Main Line Private Steam Railway Operator, and Dave Richardson, who will be responsible for the day-to-day administration of FEDRAIL.

FEDRAIL SA has already forged links with the FEDECRAIL (the European Federation of Museum & Tourist Railways) and WATTRAIN (The World Association of Tourist Trams and Trains) and we subscribe to their objectives and philosophies.

We invite interested parties from around the world to join FEDRAIL SA to strengthen ties with Southern African Railway Heritage.

To become a member, contact membership@fedrailsa.com or call Dave Richardson on +27 (0) 82 447 9167. The FEDRAIL SA website will go live shortly and we look forward to receiving comments there.



We had a most successful Cherry Festival event with an exceptional turnout for our train rides and walking tours. The new Waenhuis Cafe was in full swing and served a variety of meals to many happy customers. Our Oxen were out and about with our Voortrekker wagon which was complemented by a Military Vehicle display. We shall be announcing our 2016 programme of public events in the next week so please check our website, www.sandstone-estates.com, for information. Meanwhile, we are open to the public for Walking Tours till the end of the year. For Bookings, please contact Larissa or Alina on (South Africa) 051 933 2235.



Scenes from Cherry Festival at Sandstone Estates 16 - 21 November 2015.
The four corner images by **Dave Richardson**
The centre one by **Dr Danie Malan**





ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME

We have started a programme in association with the Department of the Environment to eliminate invasive species of trees on the farm. This is in terms of a government edict that we adhere to. We are using our outstanding Vermeer Chipper which feeds our Richard Western grain trailers. We are currently doing about 40-tons per day. The woodchips will be turned into compost.

The Vermeer Chipper at work

We really have almost nothing to report as far as modern farming is concerned because in reality, our farming activities have ground to a halt. At the moment the forecasts do not look good due to the strong presence of the El Nino ocean warming phenomenon.

In Closing...

JUST ONE CUP, IS ALL WE ASK

We hope that you have enjoyed reading this 4th edition Newsletter as much as we have enjoyed putting it together!

We would like to appeal for your help: when you close this document, please would you fill a cup with precious life-giving water ~ wherever you are in the world ~ and go and pour it on a potted plant or on a plant in your garden... while saying the words:

“please make it rain in the Free State”

We are hoping that a common world-wide thought will bring an end to the severe drought in this area!

— with our sincere thanks, in anticipation of a downpour —



*We wish you a very Beefy Christmas
and a Happy MOOO Year*



*From all of us at Sandstone!
THAT'S ALL FOR THIS ISSUE!*

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*Please click on the logo to visit the
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