



Stars of Sandstone

NEWSLETTER NO: XI

30TH MARCH – 9TH APRIL 2017

STARS OF SANDSTONE 2017 UPDATE

Welcome to yet another *Stars 2017* newsletter. One can actually feel the tempo building up as the event approaches.

We have started to categorise the registrations so that we know who is interested in which activity. This enables us to tailor-make the programme and also to put people in touch with the individuals on the ground who will be running various sections of the show. If you have not registered and if you are about to, please put as much detail in as possible as to what interests you. On the other hand, if you just indicate “general interest” we understand, as many people visit because of the diversity of our Heritage items.

Once again, if you have a specific skill and you are keen to participate, please do let us know. We will be very dependent next year on outside assistance. The number of Heritage assets vastly exceeds the number of people we have to operate them and therefore our ability to put on the best possible show.

If you have registered for *Stars of Sandstone 2017* but have not yet confirmed your booking, please do so as soon as possible so that we may invoice you. Please bear in mind that our capacity for the event is limited, and we would not want to disappoint you or your group.

Don't forget to elaborate regarding your specific areas of interest or any special interests that any one of your group might have. Please note there is no pressure for this, because we are very happy to have you as a relaxed member of the guest community.

We look forward to hearing from you.

LESS THAN 200 DAYS TO GO



Although Spring is in the air, Sandstone Estates and the complex is still in its winter colours

STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS

We have received the following from Wolfgang Schumacher. Our German visitors and people who have access to these channels should not miss this pre-Stars TV coverage.

The documentary about Sandstone 2015 will be broadcast on **Oct 1 (16:30)** and on Dec 17 (16 :00) on the German TV channel SWR Fernsehen. SWR is available throughout Europe via satellite Astra 1N.

After the broadcasting the video stream will be available for one week at: <http://www.swr.de/eisenbahn-romantik/index.html>



Preparing the Stars



A TALE OF TWO GARRATTS

The undoubted Star for our 2017 event will be NGG11 Number 52. The locomotive is now rapidly approaching completion and its steam test in preparation for its move to Sandstone. Our picture on the right shows the handsome lines of this loco.

Another, but larger, Garratt locomotive which may make an appearance at the Stars of Sandstone 2017 event is GMAM Number 4079, "Lyndie Lou", the first locomotive ever acquired by the Sandstone Heritage Trust in 1997. After a number of years at Waterval Boven depot, it was sold to Randfontein Estates Gold Mine in the 1980s where it became their R15 and finally R1.

It was last steamed in 2013 while on loan to Reefsteamers in Germiston but was stood down with worn wheels. Now the locomotive is to steam again after repairs to the wheels and recertification of the boiler and some minor repairs. The work is expected to begin shortly for completion early in 2017.

We have many technical hurdles to overcome with No. 4079 so hold thumbs that the locomotive appears in all its glory next year.

These pictures show 4079 leaving Magaliesburg in 2008 and climbing the bank effortlessly at Battery near Krugersdorp. If you look closely, you will see driver Att de Necker looking very relaxed! Pictures courtesy of Reefsteamers



COACH CLASS ACCOMMODATION

As mentioned in Newsletter 10 we have now finalised our accommodation in our ex SAR main line sleeper coaches. Full details and pricing can be found by clicking on the link below:

http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/Main_Line_Coach_Accommodation_REV.pdf



SAR Type C-34 First class mainline coach

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STEAM REPORTS

The weekly reports from Gert Jubileus and his team have proved to be a hit with our readers and friends. Links to the latest ones generated since Newsletter 10:

http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/2_Sept_2016.pdf

http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/14_sept_2016.pdf

<http://www.sandstone-estates.com/index.php/railway-heritage-58/2ft-narrow-gauge/3177-steam-report-26-sept>

Preparing the Stars

3'6" ROLLING STOCK: COACH 8041

Amidst the items listed during the scrapping of redundant Transnet assets which took place earlier in 2016 were a number of coaches, including number 8041. Often referred to as the "Missionary" Coach, this short unit, with a single axle at one end and a bogie at the other, was the last of its type, having been built for the Cape Government Railways in 1902.

Most visitors to Millsite Depot looking at the staged steam locomotives will remember this diminutive vehicle sandwiched between 4E electric, E219, and a flat wagon.

After an article in the Railway Modellers Information Group newsletter of 2014 on "The Medical Officers" coach (or RMO coach), interest grew in this vehicle. Renowned South African coach expert, Peter Stow, joined the conversation on the history of 8041 and identified it as an Officials Coach.

When withdrawn from service it was placed at De Aar on display with 6th Class 462 as part of the Museum Collection until the closure of that depot. In 1987, it was moved to Millsite where it stood for almost 30 years with subsequent deterioration of the wooden body. The Federation of Heritage Railways of Southern Africa (FEDRAIL SA) was monitoring all of the pending Transnet disposals, and alerted Sandstone Heritage Trust who realised the historic significance of the unit and applied to lease lend it from Transnet Foundation for restoration before it was scrapped. This was immediately granted.

At the end of August, the Sandstone team led by Des Clarke, moved into Millsite to collect the coach for transport to the Eastern Free State. As mentioned above, the coach was in an awkward position, but after two hours, 8041 was safely on the Sandstone lowbed and on its way.



As one can see it is in very poor condition having stood for so long. Squeezing 8041 out of the gap and up and over the fence. Pictures by Dave Richardson



8041 at De Aar in 1983. Picture by John Vincent.



8041 in company with 6th Class 462 at De Aar in 1983.

Picture by John Vincent

It is now at Hoekfontein where it is being assessed for a rebuild. Although no drawings appear to exist for the coach, the interior is still recognisable as having a sink and toilet at one end, an open saloon area in the middle and a small compartment at the other end with a bunk bed. It is from this basic information, and a large collection of photographs available, that Sandstone will proceed with the restoration.

Sandstone would like to thank Peter Stow, Les Pivnic and the Railway Modellers Information Group for the background information on 8041 used in the compilation of this article.



GALIEKS (or Cane Wagons for the uninitiated)

Left: Tentativa No 6, O&K 12140 (now restored as "Anna" at Sandstone) at Fazenda Tentativa in Angola in 1969 with a load of sugar cane. Picture by Jeff Lanham

Below: Sezela No 1 with Galiex outside the Sezela Sugar offices in Sezela. Picture by Conrad Klusener



The sugar cane railways of Kwa Zulu Natal (KZN) have fascinated enthusiasts world-wide long after their demise in the late 1960's. Many of the locomotives were exported to many corners of the world but Sandstone has a good collection of these locos that worked in the cane fields. What's missing though are the Galiexs or cane wagons (also known as Golovans) that these locos hauled. Always seeming to be overloaded there appear to be no survivors. With the assistance of Conrad Klusener from Illovo Sugar we have obtained a drawing to construct this type of wagon, although bogies/axles are still a problem.

The word is out in the sugar industry in KZN for any wagons that may still exist but we call on our readers to assist if they know of the whereabouts of any. Whatever their condition we are generally still able to restore them. At the next Stars of Sandstone event in 2017 we plan to run a demonstration sugar cane train, we will have the sugar cane but we need the Galiexs!

If you can assist please contact Louise on e-mail, tourism@sandstone.co.za.

Preparing yet more Stars



In-depth professional railway information for the true enthusiast

Les Pivnic is well known to South African rail enthusiasts and worldwide. A former Assistant Curator of the original South African Railways Museum in Johannesburg, Les has put together his love for railways in a special edition of the online magazine, South African Railways Illustrated. Click on the link below to read the story of a man with true passion for railways.

https://issuu.com/southafricanrailwaynews/docs/my_love_affair_with_railways_les_p

DINING CAR No 218 "RIET"

In September 1919, the General Manager of South African Railways (SAR) wrote to the Chief Mechanical Engineer in Pretoria highlighting the increase in passengers taking meals and the difficulties in accommodating them in the current dining cars of the period where the kitchen was part of the dining car and limited the amount of seating.

His proposal was to have separate dining (with increased seating) and kitchen cars (with staff accommodation) and cut the need for two dining cars on certain trains as well as an extra compartment coach for staff accommodation. This was a milestone in the history of catering on the SAR.

The subsequent first design was the A-22 Dining Car coupled to the AA-23 Kitchen Car. The first two series of these units were built in Pretoria and Durban with a single unit being built in the UK in Birmingham, 16 being delivered between 1924 and 1926. The first three being converted from A-16/A-17 single diners already in service. All the dining cars received names and number 198 "Umgeni" is in the Sandstone collection and used as part of the Waenhuis catering area next to Hoekfontein Station.

A further batch was built in the UK between 1927 and 1928 of which number 218 "Riet" is also in the Sandstone collection. Together with Number 198 after withdrawal from service in 1980 and 1981 these units formed part of the famous Train Restaurant in Halfway House near Johannesburg (originally named L'Orient Express) where diners at the time could eat such rare delicacies as snake and crocodile! With the demise of the Train Restaurant in 2002 the dining cars were put up for auction and sold.

The buyer reneged on the deal and in 2003 Sandstone purchased them together with AA-23 Kitchen Car number 253 (the original kitchen car attached to 198 by now stripped of its kitchen and used as a private dining room) and relocated them to Sandstone.

Number 218, "Riet" has been undergoing a restoration over the last two years so that it may join number 198 as part of the dining facilities at Hoekfontein in time for the Stars of Sandstone event in 2017. Number 218 is expected to be completed shortly and will then be moved to the Waenhuis area.



The interior of 218 during restoration.

Our sincerest thanks to Les Pivnic for the historical and technical information on the A-22 Dining Cars supplied in his book, Railway Dining Cars in South Africa. Les also wrote:

The dining car no. 218 "Riet" is part of the A-22/AA-23 class which started working from 1927-1928.

"Riet" was actually the last in its class to be used and was imported from England- built by Birmingham Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd.

The first of this class was built in the SAS workshop in Pretoria and Durban and started working in 1924.

Some of this class were locally built in the SAS workplaces and some of the others were imported from England, and that led to the dining cars having different types of lights.



Examples of the dining car's original lighting.



*The interior of No 198 "Umgeni".
Picture by Danie Pretorius*

Military & Classic Vehicles



THE M3 LIGHT TANK (HONEY)

We reported on the acquisition of a Honey Tank which has been received from the SA Armour Museum in Bloemfontein and which will form part of a cooperative restoration project. Andy Selfe has kindly provided us with the history of this tank which played a significant role in North Africa during World War Two, particularly with regard to the participation of the South African Forces.

According to George Forty and Jack Livesey's World Encyclopaedia, the M3 Light Tank was developed out of the M2A4 and had many of its same features, like the 7-sided turret and 37mm/1,46" gun. The M3 was designed in the (Northern) Spring of 1940, and it had thicker armour than its predecessors, which increased the weight to 12.7 tonnes, battle-ready. This was cause for a stronger suspension being fitted. The British Army used it for the first time in anger in the Western Desert campaign, at that time it was officially called the Stuart 1, but it was soon affectionately called the Honey.

Early models were riveted, but gradually more and more welding was employed. Propulsion was either by diesel or petrol, the latter option being the 7-cylinder Continental W670 Radial engine. Originally side-sponson machine guns were fitted, but they wasted too much ammunition, being too difficult to aim, so they were phased out. In the side sponsons' place, extra fuel tanks were fitted. The Commander's cupola was also done away with, instead a powered-traverse single turret was the norm.

An experimental model was fitted with twin Cadillac engines. This was the prototype for the M5 Light tank. The Stuart / Honey was mostly a 'British' tank, whereas the M5 was associated with US forces. The most obvious difference was the sloping glacis plate of the later M5 Stuart, the almost straight up driver and assistant driver's hatches are a distinguishing feature of the 'Honey'. The two twin-wheel bogeys distinguish the Stuarts from the three pairs on the M4 Shermans.

Crew: 4
Length: 4.52m
Width: 2.24m
Height: 2.31m
Armament: 37mm Quick-fire Anti-Tank Gun, 5 (later 3) .30" Browning Machine Guns
Armour (max): 51mm
Speed: 58 km/hr
Range: 113 km
We will be tackling this project in the next few years.



Where else in the world would you see a little train chugging along under the mighty snow-covered Maluti Mountains with a Ratel overtaking it?

Sandstone Estates is on the South African border and therefore there is normal border control activity, much of which involves the Military. Our collection of Military vehicles fits into the landscape very well and adds considerable additional interest to visitors and to train passengers in particular.



Dickon Daggitt, a well-known Cape Town car enthusiast, has registered for the 2017 event and plans to drive to the Free State in his restored 1925 Lancia Lambda Series 5. He has supplied us with the following information.

The Lancia Lambda was a very innovative car when first built in 1923 in Series 1 form. The Series 5 was introduced in 1925 with 1050 built. The car was the first to have unitary body construction, although not a stressed roof. It is fitted with a V4 aluminium engine of 2121cc producing 59hp and, for the Series 5, a 4 speed gearbox.

With the small numbers produced of this model and only around 11200 in total, it is a very rare car indeed in the 21st Century.

We recently acquired a 1973 10-ton Leyland truck that will serve a number of useful purposes on the farm. Firstly it will allow our 6 on farm soccer teams to travel around the district to play soccer on weekends. In addition it will be an invaluable general purpose vehicle for the farm. Once again our approach is always to integrate our commercial farming operations with our preservation activities where possible. This is a good example of that.

BRING YOUR CLASSIC OR VINTAGE CAR TO STARS 2017

We have had a number of people asking us if they can bring Classic Cars to Stars 2017. The answer is definitely yes. We have a designated area for them and although we have quite a number of cars of our own we do like to see old cars out and about at level crossings and generally participating in the event. We are also encouraging period dress where possible so if you have an old car, come dressed for the occasion as well.



Chris Wilson, who found this gem of a Morris in Frere, along with many other interesting items, shares the experience with us:

"Entering Dennis's (Petersen's) yard and workshop was an experience. Nothing much seemed to have changed since about 1960. Just through the gate, a Case SC, out of use but very complete, greets the visitor. A Farmall BMD, and two Fordson Majors stand randomly, all used regularly on Dennis farm.

Amongst the piles of scrap and discarded parts outside, a 1950s Bedford cab serves as a hen coop. And inside there, in two opposite corners, almost invisible under dust, a Vauxhall Cresta and 1950 Ford Bakkie.

But up on blocks, slap in the entrance, was the Morris. Dennis was reticent about it and didn't encourage interest; beyond the fact that it belonged to his late father and had been driven in to its current spot after his death, he would say very little about it – and would get really annoyed if one even hinted at him selling it.

One can only speculate how long it had stood there by the turn of the century when Dennis himself passed away – or how many "City" collectors, scenting a bargain had turned up with cash – and been sent off with Anglo Saxon curses ringing in their ears!"



All Vintages

VINTAGE VEHICLES STRUTTING THEIR STUFF STEAM WEEKEND 6 AUGUST – FROM CHRIS WILSON

International pickup

This Western Cape IH R110 series pickup was restored some years ago to a very high standard, by Jannie Du Toit and Andy Selfe. The paint and decals reflect that of a workshop vehicle from an International tractor dealer of the early 1950s; and as such the bakkie forms a valuable part of our International tractor and implement collection.

Some deterioration from long periods of standing has occurred since, and it has not been a reliable runner for some time. Starting with the fuel system, the electric fuel pump was defective, and the cause of this was blockages in the fuel pipes, mainly rust. Removing the tank revealed heavy rusting, even a hole midway up the side. The carb was stripped cleaned and overhauled.

Once the fuel system was sorted, the bakkie ran a bit better, but still not smoothly, and was inclined to die for no valid reason.

We decided to check all electrical components, and a new coil, points, rotor and a good used distributor cap later, she ran much better. During this event, she clocked up some 30 trouble free miles.



The IH waiting at the level crossing ... One can imagine that just beyond the crossing is a small halt; that the train will pause long enough to offload a few milk churns and other sundries, which will be loaded onto the trailer and bakkie. Such was rural life in the 1950s!

The tractor is an Allis Chalmers "U", retrofitted with a Perkins diesel. Perkins supplied kits to convert most popular petrol/paraffin tractors of the 40s and 50s to diesel, using of course their reliable range of engines.

Vintage Tractors and Stationary Engines

At the same event we put on a display of vintage tractors and Danie Pretorius assisted us to get a number of our stationary engines operational.

Oliver 77 Diesel was seen with the snow-capped Malutis in the background.

Danie Pretorius exhibited a selection of stationary engines, which created a lot of interest. These fascinating little engines were once a common sight on every farm and indeed most rural establishments, providing power for borehole pumping, electricity generating, milling, sheep shearing and just about everything we expect electricity to power today. The coming of Eskom to the countryside in the 60s rendered most of them redundant, but here and there a few are still to be found in daily use.

The Waterloo Boy was John Deere's first ever tractor and when you consider that the planet is populated with millions of John Deere machines it is amazing how something can develop technologically so quickly in a relatively short space of time. Our Waterloo Boy is one of our most prized possessions.



SET THE SCENE

Representatives of the Sandstone Heritage Trust attended the Goodwood Revival meeting in West Sussex in the UK in early September. This is a strikingly well organised and exciting event, particularly for Classic Motor Vehicle enthusiasts.

We took note of the fact that probably 70% of the people went to the trouble to set-up in period clothing. Cars, steam engines, tractors etc all attracted people who were dressed in different ways to reflect what they were driving.

So why not plan to attend *Stars of Sandstone* 2017 dressed in something classic, something rural or something relevant? You will have huge fun getting it together! The ladies will not believe how stylish clothes of that era can be.

CALLING ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS TO CAPTURE THE SCENE

One of the joys of attending the Stars of Sandstone event is the opportunity to photograph a myriad of diverse scenes and experiences. In the railway arena Sandstone is able to present a wide variety of locomotives, rolling stock and scenery for the most discerning guests.

Master photographer Rod Hering will be coordinating photographic activities at the Stars of Sandstone event in 2017 and all photographers attending are urged to make contact with Rod to learn and be kept in touch about the special events planned. Rod can be contacted by e mail on rodhering@gmail.com



Of earlier Vintage still



Erik Holm has written a short summary of the history of ox wagons so that one again understands the context in which we save, restore and preserve these important items.

Ox wagons in the Anglo Boer War

At the outbreak of hostilities in 1899 the ox wagon was still the main transporter of goods in South Africa – trains were limited to the route from Cape to Kimberley, from there through Botswana to Bulawayo, and from Pretoria to Lourenco Marques. All other routes and distribution routes were serviced by an estimated 100 000 wagons of transport riders as evident by scenes on the markets. To this must be added at least one buck wagon per farm and major town business.

From the photographs of the trench-phase of the war, when the Boers were still living in their wagons, it is evident that about half of these were still Kakebeenwa – type wagons. It seems that the farmers hung on to these antiquated models for purposes of the Nagmaal and travel.

The war wrought havoc on the wagon population of the country. Both sides in the conflict had vested interest in destroying wagons. The Boers burnt the (mostly confiscated) wagons in British re-supply efforts. The British burnt thousands of wagons of capitulated Boer laagers, and with the houses on farms to make any life on the farms impossible. There is no record of the total number of wagons destroyed. But it must run to tens of thousands.

The result is that, of the about 500 wagons we managed to trace in an ongoing study, fewer than 20 are Kakebeenwa and fewer than 40 are Bokwa-types that date before the war. Most of the Kakebeenwa which survived the war were in the Cape at the time: the specimens in Transvaal collections were mostly moved up during the commemorative trek in 1935.

OX WAGON RESTORATION UPDATE

Erik Holm has just finished completing another ox wagon which will be added to our collection. This is the fifth one he has completed so far. He has provided the following history on this wagon:

Western Cape Ox wagon

This “kaalwa” or open wagon dates from 1919, and from the slatted rails can be traced to the Western Cape, probably Paarl.

Little is known of the wagon except that it was extensively repaired and rebuilt (see below). The tyres of the rear wheels were worn paper thin and had to be replaced. The front axle was made by W. Brockhouse (West Bromwich, England), and the rear axle is a replacement.

Restoration

The wagon was in a poor state, and previously very superficially rebuilt. The “langwa” was a gum pole without metal reinforcements, the brake without blocks or shoes, the shamels with ends fixed with plaster of paris (!), the rear axle replaced with a thin one not matching the front, the wheel grids roughly assembled from scrap and the front hubs and most of the felloes totally rotten. All these items were replaced and fixed, using recycled original wagon parts.

Eventually the wagon was re-assembled with as much as possible from the “original”, but it remains somewhat of a Frankenstein product – in itself quite representative of older working wagons! The pole was built from scratch, the front hubs and wheel grills replaced and the cleaning, patchwork and re-painting done in no particular wagon maker’s style.



Our oxen and our ox wagons are a significant part of the Sandstone Heritage Trust's commitment to preserving the best of the past for the future.



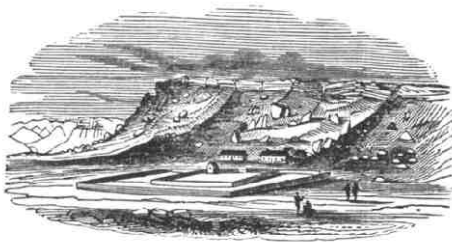
Johannesburg market (undated) by Barnett. This is the type of useful archive photograph we use to help make sure that we get things right. This was a typical Johannesburg “traffic jam” in the late 1800s. Photo credit: 'Nick Lera Collection' (Picture supplied by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu)

Free State History

Relevant local history in the Eastern Free State

We are privileged to have as one of our neighbours an elderly gentleman by the name of Felix Sorour who has been in the district his entire life. He is recognised by many top academics as someone with extremely finite knowledge of what happened in this area when wars and skirmishes were common place from the early 1800's right through until after the Anglo-Boer War. With Felix's assistance we have added a new section to our newsletter which will provide our visitors with an opportunity to understand a little bit more about the rich and fascinating background of our particular part of the Eastern Free State. They say that we are what history has made us and so it is natural that we should be interested in understanding a lot more about the history that evolved. Of course the history of the Eastern Free State and its conflicts actually forms part of the bigger national tapestry of history that made South Africa what it is today.

Although the Anglo-Boer War is often mentioned in the history of the area surrounding Sandstone, the history of the area and the Boers goes back much further as Felix recounts in his article on Piet Retief, Dingane and Sekonyela. Sekonyela Mountain is now part of Sandstone Estates.



Imperani, a Wesleyan Station.

Left: Woodcut of Imperani Mission : "A Narrative of a visit to the Mauritius and South Africa" by Rev James Backhouse

The story of Retief, Sekonyela & Dingane's cattle

Why are Sekonyela's mountain and Soutkop not regarded as the place where Piet Retief recovered Dingane's cattle? This is so because all the discussions and negotiations took place at a Methodist mission station a few kilometres away, on the slopes of Imperani Mountain.

For those who are unacquainted with the area and the history, a little background will perhaps allow for a little more understanding of the circumstances.

Who was Piet Retief and what was his connection to Sekonyela a Batlokwa chief, Dingane the Zulu chief and the area that was later to become known as Ficksburg district and today a part of Sandstone Estates?

Piet Retief.... Voortrekker leader seeking new ground to settle in Natal

Sekonyela..... Chief of the Batlokwa or Wild Cat tribe settled on Marabeng

Mantatisi..... Sekonyela's mother and chief of the Batlokwa while he was a minor.

Rev. James Allison.... Methodist Missionary to the Batlokwa

A few landmarks: Yoala Boholo mountain

Means the Place of the "Big Drink". Situated a few kilometres North-East of Ficksburg, it was the stronghold of Mantatisi, mother of Sekonyela and leader of the Batlokwa tribe during the Difaqane wars, while her son Sekonyela was still a minor. Yoala Boholo mountain is bounded by Vailima, Avondzon, Sekonyela, North End and Boschfontein Farms. Some portions of Sandstone Estates

Sekonyela Mountain

Also known as Koaneng, or Marabeng. This horseshoe mountain alongside of Yoala Boholo and Zoutkop, was the Batlokwa chief Sekonyela's stronghold. Also part of Sandstone Estates. It was the original site of the first Methodist Mission Station to the Batlokwa tribe in 1834. In 1836 the mission was moved a few kilometres away to Imperani Mountain.

Soutkop

When the first Voortrekkers passed through this area, they observed that because many vultures nested on this kop, it was white from all their droppings.....hence Sout Kop. The farm, today, also a part of Sandstone Estates, was never involved in either the Retief or Sekonyela saga.



Sekonyela Mountain today with Sout Kop in the background of the lower picture.
Pictures by Des Clarke

Imperani Mission Station

The first Methodist Mission that was situated in the horseshoe of the Sekonyela Mountain in 1834 under Rev. James Allison was moved to the Northern slopes of the Imperani Mountain in 1836

Piet Retief was leader of one of the treks which became part of the Great Trek. Later he became Head Commandant. On 5 October 1837, Retief established a camp, Kerkenberg, on the top of the Drakensberg. Deciding to investigate settlement possibilities he set off with fourteen men and four wagons, telling the others to remain there until his return

On Retief's descent of the Drakensberg, he passed a group of warriors herding cattle before them up the mountains. Their chief was called Sekonyela of the Batlokwa tribe.

Satisfied with the prospects of the Natal countryside Retief negotiated with Dingane. In November 1837, he received the promise of land for Boer settlement in Natal, provided that he recovered and returned Dingane's stolen cattle and "if possible the thief as well" (Walker). From descriptions given by the Zulus, the stolen cattle were probably those Retief had seen while coming down the mountain and the thief probably Sekonyela.

Retief and his commando set out for Wild Cat Country on 28 December, and they were accompanied by Dingane's induna and herdsmen whose search among the Boer herds had failed to produce the missing Zulu herd.

On arrival at Commando Nek, Retief sent messengers to request permission from the

Chief for the Boers to retrace their steps through Wild Cat Country in exchange for attractive gifts. He suggested that as the Boers were fatigued after their lengthy journey, a meeting with the Chief be held at the Rev. James Allison's mission-station in the area where they set up camp.

In the Diary of Erasmus Smit we read how Piet Retief recovered Dingane's cattle from Sekonyela as narrated by Daniel Pieter Bezuidenhout:

"When we came into Sekonyela's neighbourhood, Retief made the Zulus (Dingane's men) put on clothes. We had had a negotiation with Sekonyela to give us permission to travel through his country to

continued next page...

More History

continued from page 8...

...to Natal, and when now we returned from Dingane, Retief sent a message to Sekonyela that we had now come to enquire how the matter stood as to the road. On the following day Sekonyela came, and gave us to understand that his mother — who still had the first voice in his council — was willing to give us a right of road. I had a pair of handcuffs in my bag and as Sekonyela was sitting on the ground, I ran up to him and said: "Look at these beautiful rings", and closed the handcuffs on his arms saying: "That is the way we secure rogues in our country".

Retief then said: "upon my word you have been doing wrong. Send for the cattle which you have taken from the Zulus". During the next three days the cattle were recovered while Sekonyela remained a handcuffed prisoner.

The stolen cattle were grazing on a large portion of what today constitutes Sandstone Estates from the Caledon River to the Rosendal tar road.

Very soon after Retief recovered the cattle from Sekonyela the Imperani mission was visited by the Rev James Backhouse, (July 1839) and in his book "A Narrative of a visit to the Mauritius and South Africa" he corroborates the account given by Bezuidenhout.

There are many variations in the numbers of cattle, horses and guns recovered, but if the words of Bezuidenhout are any indication, the Zulu indunas were ordered "drive out those cattle that belong to you, and if any are missing of the number, choose from those of Sekonyela as many as will make up your tally." which was 300. This was done.

Retief further took 53 horses and 33 guns "for the trouble you have caused", and these the trekkers did not return to Dingane. Retief had been repeatedly warned of Dingane's possible treachery by Missionary George Champion and others but nothing could dissuade him. He had written letters to Dingane telling him of the Boers successes against Mzilikazi, and this disturbed Dingane severely. It was against this background that on the 3rd February 1838 Retief and his Boers arrived at Dingane's kraal with the recovered cattle. He kept the Boers waiting for several days with displays of dancing and mock battles. Eventually however he signed a treaty (drawn up in English) ceding the land. The next day the Boers were to return joyfully to their party under the Drakensberg.

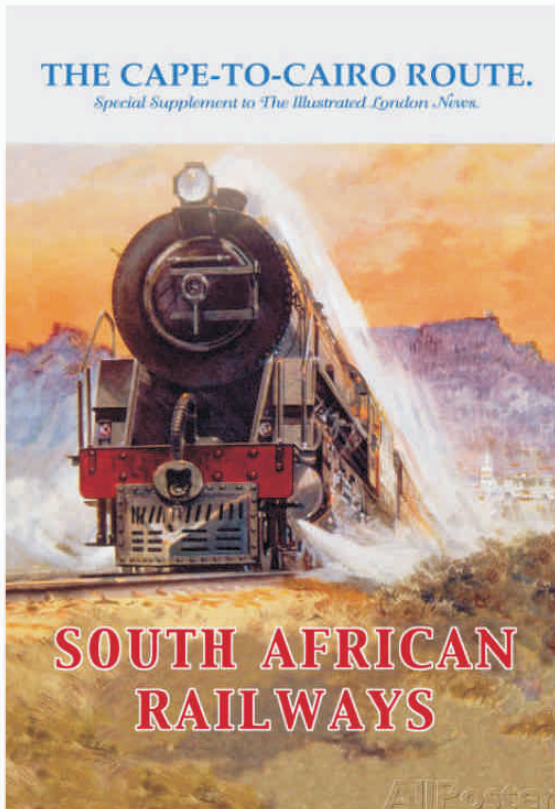
However Dingane was extremely upset and on the 6th February 1838 asking Retief and his men to leave their horses and muskets outside the enclosure for another display he suddenly shouted to his warriors "Babulleni abaThakati" "kill the wizards."

101 unarmed men perished within minutes on kwaMatiwane, the hill of execution. Retief was the last man to die. Their bodies were left on the hillside to be eaten by wild animals, as was Dingane's custom with his enemies.

This led to the battle of Blood River. But that is another story.

SOURCES

- Zululand True Stories 1780 to 1978 J. C. van der Walt
- History of Southern Africa Eric Walker
- Die Geskiedenis van Ficksburg. 1867-1967 Van Rhyn & Klopper
- Rule of Fear Peter Becker
- The Diary of Erasmus Smit Edited H.F.Schoon
- A Narrative of a visit to the Mauritius and South Africa" by Rev James Backhouse



RAILWAY POSTERS

Tastefully produced posters were printed every year by the Railway authorities and were used to publicise different destinations throughout the country.

This Cape to Cairo route which is actually a copy of The Illustrated London News supplement mentions South Africa Railways although as far as we know they never travelled all the way to Cairo even if that was an ambition of theirs.

There are a number of interesting websites:

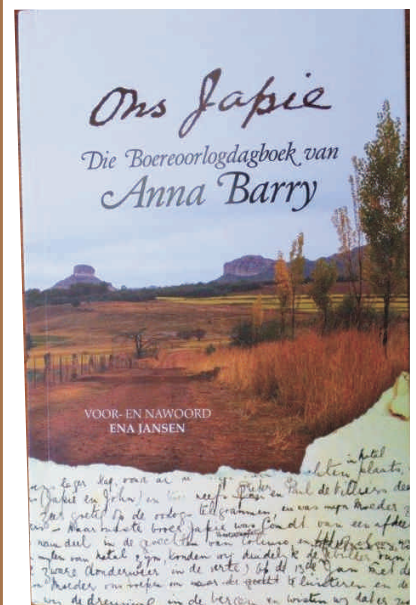
<http://www.allposters.com/gallery.asp?startat=%2Fgetthumb.asp&txtSearch=South+Africa+railways&CID=2995698A628B4327AEA85AF75C0B00C6&SSK=South+Africa+railways&exactMat=yes>

<https://za.pinterest.com/herdboi/art-vintage-south-african-travel-posters/>

ARCHIVES

Felix has also drawn our attention to a book which makes fascinating reading. It is in Afrikaans but it is the diary of a young girl who lived through the Anglo Boer War and who wrote very succinctly and accurately about her experiences and observations. It is very much along the lines of Anne Frank's diary. The good news is that Anna Barry survived.

This book is available on the Internet.



Seen Around Sandstone

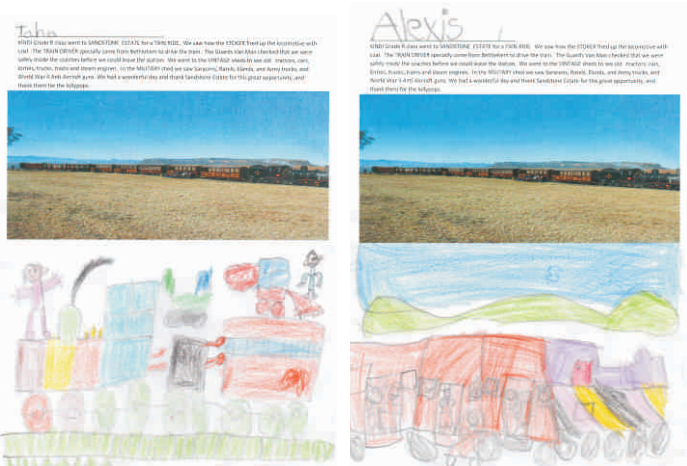


The Kindi Children at Grootdraai during their train ride. Picture by Sandstone

OPENING OUR DOORS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

When locomotives are being tested we often advise the local community, i.e. schools, kindergartens etc. and ask them if they might like to come along and enjoy a free train ride.

Each year the Kindi School for disadvantaged children, led by Janet Barrett, visits Sandstone. Rather than the usual report from the Sandstone staff, the children themselves compiled their own illustrated reports as you can see below.



Janet Barrett sent us the following thank you note:

Dear Sandstone Estates,

As you can see by these examples of the children's work, they had an uplifting experience. Thank you for making a positive difference to their lives.

Kind regards, and gratitude

Janet Barrett



FICKSBURG PRIMARY

We also hosted the Ficksburg Primary School and here is a short report on their visit on Tuesday, 30 August 2016:

The Gr.1 and Gr.4 learners from Ficksburg Primary School came to visit Sandstone Estates for a train trip to Grootdraai and guided tour. A total of 180 children attended with their teachers and the principal of the school, Mr Venter.

Henry in-spanned the oxen and walked them next to the train. The children were absolutely fascinated by the train and the oxen.

By 12:30 all of the children had returned to school and the teachers were very happy and definitely want a return visit next year.

Report and pictures by Larissa Clarke.

DRONE PHOTOGRAPHY

Readers will have noticed that we deploy our drone extensively in order to capture the best possible views of Sandstone Estates and the surrounding countryside.

We are aware that a number of people wish to bring them to Sandstone Estates next year to aid capturing the best possible photographs, particularly of moving trains and close-up aerial shots of locomotives.

If you are contemplating joining the panoptic group please contact Des Clarke on E: desc@sandstone.co.za, T: 083 252 5229.



Nature & Wildlife

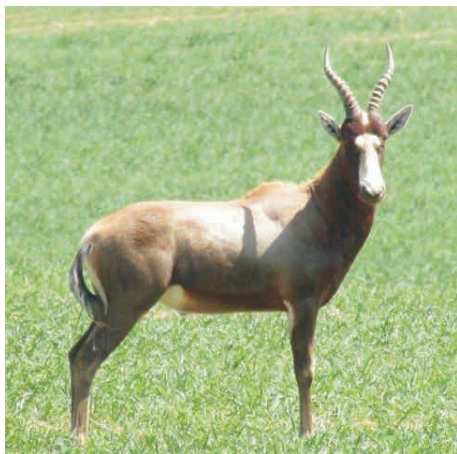
RUNNING FREE

Before the current owners bought Sandstone Estates it was a Game farm. Although most of the game was removed a few survived and they have prospered. We have over 70 Blesbok and over 300 Springbok on the farm. We allow them to go where they like and graze where they like and contrary to many rural religions they do mostly no harm whatsoever.

Because of the threat of people hunting with dogs from Lesotho they tend to stay close to our complex.



Blesbok and Springbok enjoying over winter stubble



THE FAUNA & FLORA OF SANDSTONE

While most people would not associate commercial farming with fauna and flora, Sandstone is blessed with a wide variety of both.

We strive to farm in harmony with nature and the successes we have achieved in this regard can be measured by the wide variety of fauna and flora the farms support.

A lot of farming enterprises use every inch of their lands for crop production, whereas Sandstone, in its quest to balance farming with nature, has set aside tracts of land for natural habitats.

Fauna

The farms host a number of antelope such as Springbok, Blesbok, Reed Buck, Duikers and Steenbok. Smaller animals include Slender Mongoose, Banded Mongoose, Cape Hare and Ground Squirrels. Predators such as Black Blacked Jackals and Wild Cats can also be seen on the farms.

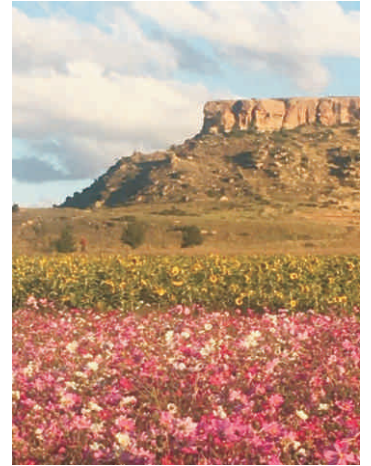
The farms teem with Bird Life and include, amongst many others, Sunbird, Whydah, Francolin, Guinea Fowl, Heron, Ibis, Weaver, Crested Barbet, Egret, Hoopoe, Crane, Plovers, Mouse Bird and a number of predators, including Eagle, Kestrel, the Cape Eagle, Barn Owl and Harrier Hawk. The dams also host water fowl such as Moorhens and a variety of duck species.

If you are fascinated by snakes, Puff adders, Rinkhals (Ring-Necked Spitting Cobra), Red Lipped and Common Brown Snake have also been observed.

Flora

The Eastern Free State, with its open plains and cold winter climate, does not play host to many indigenous trees. Sandstone has, over many years, planted 1000s of trees in and around the complex. Together with Linda Da Luca, one of South Africa's best known experts on indigenous trees, we have succeeded in ascertaining which of South Africa's indigenous trees would succeed in making the Eastern Free State their home.

This programme has been extremely successful. Trees including Acacia "karoo" (Sweet Thorn), Celtis "africana" (White Stinkwood) Combretum "erythrophylin" (Red river Bush Willow), Searsia "lancea" and "pendulina" (Karee) Olea "africana" (Wild Olive), amongst many others, have been planted and are well adapted to the environment.



Readers who have been to Sandstone and to the Eastern Free State are aware of the magnificent show of Cosmos this part of world puts on every year. Sandstone plants Cosmos on a large scale which turns the farm into a Cosmos paradise. Photographers use the Cosmos as a background to photograph all the heritage assets on the farm.

We also plant large areas of Namaqualand Daisies (Also known as the African Daisy) to brighten up the environment at the end of winter (Flowering as it gets toward Spring). The Latin name is *Dimorphotheca sinuate* DC, Family: Asteraceae which is one of the largest families of flowering plants of the world. Those of you who have been to Namaqualand will know how this little plant turns Namaqualand into one of the world's largest flowering gardens which is visited by local and international visitor who come to see this spectacular display.

Everyone at Sandstone is encouraged to recognise our natural heritage and bio diversity and to protect it. Visitors are encouraged to take the time to look beyond our agricultural activities and heritage operations, nature awaits.

Sandstone loves its flowers. Many visitors are familiar with the large areas of Cosmos that we plant every year but now we are developing another plan for winter.

We were particularly impressed with our African Daisies *Osteospermum* this year. We started with a very small packet of seed a few years ago and have been harvesting a bigger crop every year.

Our plan is to go into commercial production with the seed shortly. They create a magnificent spectacle during the dead of winter when there is no other colour around.



Modern Farming on the Estate

We have almost completed the preparation of 3,500 ha of arable land which now awaits the summer rains. We will be planting Sunflowers, Soya Beans and White and Yellow Maize.

Because we are likely to have early frosts in the Eastern Free State we need to get this crop in the ground by early November if possible after which time it is a risk.



The DJI Phantom 3 drone, which is an invaluable farming tool, captured this picture of our Case Magnum 335 with an Agrico 8 metre tandem offset implement

ALL ABOUT THE WHEAT CROP



We took a chance and planted wheat in June and we were rewarded with good rains in July and August which is unusual. Our crop is doing well and we are optimistic about a good harvest in January 2017.



A LOT OF BULL!!!



Sandstone recently acquired two feisty young Afrikaner bulls, similar to the one in the picture, to introduce new genetics into our Afrikaner herd. These were purchased from Pieter and Tjaart Coetzee of Wegdraai Boerdery which breeds pure bred Afrikaners in Thabazimbi which is in the Limpopo Province also known for its iron mines.

EARTHMOVING



This is also a good time of the year to improve our roads and to deal with flaws in the landscape, namely dongas and areas which can be incorporated into arable fields. For this use our machinery from our vintage collection, namely a Cat 12 Grader (60 years old) and a Cat 612 Scraper (40 years old). What we are trying to achieve is to raise the roads above the level of the lands or veld alongside the roads. With years of grading the roads, their levels have dropped to below the lands and this turns into a river when it rains. To do this we cut the edges of the roads with the scraper and drop the soil on the existing road. In this way we achieve two things, 1) we drop the sides of the road and level them so we will be able to run a mower over them in summer to cut the grass and 2) use the soil to raise the road. In addition to raising the road we grade it in a half moon shape with the highest point in the middle of the road dropping to the sides, this way if water does run down the road it will be on the sides of the roads and not the whole road.



In addition to repairing roads we are also busy repairing dams that are dry. One of the unexpected benefits of the 2015/16 drought was the fact we were able to get on and clean 15 farm dams which had become silted up over the years.

Other Updates

MODERN WORKSHOP REPORT

With the planting season approaching, we are starting to check and repair, if necessary, equipment that will be used for planting, with the much shorter than planned planting season we had last year, most of our equipment does not need major repairs and will just be serviced. We tend to use a combination of modern and vintage equipment during the planting season. One machine that needs some work done to it is the 1964 John Deere 4020. The clutch was slipping and as it is used to haul a 12 000L water tanker for the sprayers during planting we needed to replace the clutch. A new clutch plate has been fitted and the pressure plate set. We will be re-assembling the tractor this week. Once again Sandstone Estates has the tremendous benefit of being able to draw on a large and mechanically sound inventory of old machinery which is just as sturdy and reliable as a modern tractor.



Our 1973 Leyland bus is nearing completion. It was received in a very untidy state and the workshops have redone all the mechanicals and are close to finishing the body work which was badly knocked around. New seats are being manufactured by a company in Bloemfontein. This bus will be invaluable in moving photographers and other people around the farm during Stars 2017.



The oil burning 19D locomotive, No.3321, performed superbly under the deft touch of driver Cassie Carstens. Picture by Peter Rogers



Picture by Peter Rogers

A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE

On Saturday, 27 August 2016, the Ceres Rail company quietly inaugurated their service from Ceres to the Cape Town Waterfront and back. Travelling a distance of 150 kms each way this trip is as good as it gets anywhere in the world.

The train departs from the Ceres Golf Estate site, immediately passes through a tunnel and then enters the Michell's Pass for approximately 8 kms. This dramatic and rugged landscape with its fast flowing river and waterfalls takes one's breath away. From there the line opens out into the magnificent wheat fields and farms of the Western Cape.

Proceeding through Wolseley and then on to Wellington the train reaches the Waterfront via a magnificent stretch of seafront. This is not the route followed by normal passenger trains but it is the way in which Ceres Rail introduces one to Table Mountain and the Waterfront.

The train stopped for lunch at the Royal Cape Yacht Club with its own beautiful views over the marina. The return trip was equally relaxing, again through beautiful countryside much of which one hasn't seen because one might have been sitting on the opposite side of the coach.

Derick du Toit and his team at Ceres Rail need to be complimented on their foresight and for their immaculate execution. What is a special feature of this train is it simply comprises lounge cars so everyone can walk throughout the train, go to the bar, sit in the beautiful pillared dining car or relax in any of the coaches. There is no special seating – everyone sits down and chats to friends and strangers alike. Without question one of the best run and most sociable rail experiences that one could possibly imagine. The train pulled into Ceres at 18h30 as the soft evening light faded away, enhancing the colours of the pass as it went.



Photo credit: Andy Selfe

For further details contact bookings@ceresrail.co.za or call 083 440 7868. Please make note of the Ceres Rail programme by clicking on the following link: <http://www.ceresrail.co.za/trips/>

Media Matters

STARS OF SANDSTONE 2017

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

<http://www.eglobaltravelmedia.com.au/the-spectacular-steam-and-heritage-stars-of-sandstone-festival-is-set-for-march-30-april-9-2017/>
<http://www.myza.co.za/stars-of-sandstone-steam-and-heritage-festival-set-for-easter-2017/>
<http://mypr.co.za/stars-of-sandstone-steam-and-heritage-festival-set-for-easter-2017/>
<http://www.ebizradio.com/?p=15396>
<http://www.childmag.co.za/content/stars-sandstone-festival>
<http://www.timeslive.co.za/sundaytimes/travel/2016/09/16/Free-State-Reach-for-the-stars>

BIRDLIFE SA

<http://us14.campaign-archive2.com/?u=0b7ea6fccfc1f077a17c5faeb&id=488569083a&e=14b1ac4521>

OTHER INTERESTING LINKS

http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/BLSA_August_2016.pdf
http://www.sandstone-estates.com/images/pdf/69_September_2016.pdf



3052 AVRIL STEAMS TO CULLINAN

September 4th saw 15F 3052, "Avril" haul its first revenue earning train for Pretoria based Friends of the Rail (FOTR). The run was not without difficulties, though, as a number of problems manifested themselves on 3052 after its recent overhaul which will need to be dealt with to bring the loco up to the standards required by its owner, the Sandstone Heritage Trust. Nevertheless the 550 passengers enjoyed a great day out and contributed much-needed funds to the FOTR preservation efforts. 3052 made two consecutive runs to Cullinan on the 24th and 25th September and both trips were fully booked.

In the interim the FOTR team are working hard on rectifying the problems on 3052.

Climbing out of Cullinan on the return run to Pretoria. Picture by David Benn

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MODEL ENGINEERS

How ingenious is this?

Andries Keyser writes as follows:

I have been a bit scarce on the full-size railways but I'm still continuing my miniature railway development, I should have my Lawley at Talana again this year next to the Sandstone stand.

Here is something you might enjoy, I built an inspection trolley for 3'6", powered by my live steam Lawley. Perhaps I should consider a 2" version to bring along to Sandstone one day. See attached picture.

A Video of it running can be seen at Keyser Locomotive Works - Videos | Facebook

— Andries Keyser
[mailto:andrieskeyser@yahoo.com]



Please be aware we add people to our newsletter list as a matter of course .
You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

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

THE SANDSTONE TEAM

Curator, Sandstone Heritage Trust: **Gert Jubileus**
gertj@sandstone.co.za

Farm Affairs: **Leigh Sanders**
leigh@sandstone.co.za

International Enquiries: **Louise Norton**
tourism@sandstone.co.za

South African Enquiries: **Larissa Clarke**
lclarke@sandstone.co.za



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Please click on the logo to visit the Sandstone Heritage Trust website

Event Matters & Dave Richardson
Newsletter Editor: daver@sandstone.co.za

Newsletter Production: Claire at Eschie Graffix