



1). A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

We have come to the end of another exciting, fruitful and challenging year. We are still recovering from the impact of the economic meltdown that has had such a negative impact on the growth of the economies of the world.

Reefsteamers will join the rest of the country as we take some time to rest from what has been an eventful year and embrace this period of goodwill, joy, caring and sharing. Our thoughts and prayers should also be with those who are less fortunate during this festive time.

Our 2009 trips were all successful and once again, I say 'thank you' to each and every person who made all the events possible. When I look at the events calendar for 2010, I know that it is going to be a very exciting and busy year for steam! Peter and Victor started with the completion of the long-stalled building process on Class 15F No.3046 in the beginning of September. I am proud to announce that the pair of them will have our new lady ready for her hydraulic test soon – watch this space!

Once again, as many of you will hit the road this festive season, I wish to urge you to refrain from drinking and driving. It is my hope that you will take this holiday period to rest and come back with a renewed commitment to tackle the many challenges that await us as; together, we seek to build a better club for all our steam enthusiasts.

Let me, on behalf of the Board of Reefsteamers, wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy 2010 that is filled with joy and peace. I leave you with the following phrase:

"After you've worked hard to get what you want, take the time to enjoy it. Never give up on what you really want to do. The person with big dreams is more powerful than one with all the facts". Anonymous

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Yours in steam
Elize Lubbe
Chairman: 2009

2). FROM THE EDITOR

What a shame. Our dear 'little' workhorse the Class 12AR No.1535 'Susan' (now in her 90th year) had an 'oopsie' on the Sunday trip to Magaliesburg. But thanks to the fantastic co-operation of TFR and the National Operating Centre, our passengers' enjoyment of the journey was not compromised.

Just as the train was pulling into Magaliesburg, the locomotive failed with lots of scalding water and escaping steam issuing into the cab out from around the closed firebox doors, out the ash pan and up the chimney. Thankfully, neither fireman (Saki Kekana) or driver (Chris Saayman) were injured but the train came to a stand-still, half in the station and half on the main line. The passengers were close enough to the picnic grounds to walk there 'under their own steam' as if it were.

In the meantime, the TFR pilot had contacted Krugersdorp and arranged that two diesel locomotives would come down and take the train back to Germiston.

A little while later, an eastbound goods train came down the line from Zeerust heading towards Krugersdorp. Of course, our crippled train was blocking the main line. After a short negotiation, the diesel driver uncoupled his load and connected up to our train. He pulled our train safely out of the way into the loop and alongside the station platform. Then he reconnected to his load and went on his way eastbound to Krugersdorp, 'crossing' the two westbound rescue diesels at Tarlton.

These two diesels duly arrived placed Class 12AR No.1535 'Susan' on the eastern end of the train, hooked onto our train and at the right time with the passengers safely onboard, set off to Maraisburg with our pilot driving. At Maraisburg, the pilot driver was relieved by a Germiston crew. as he was booked to drive the next morning.

The Germiston crew took our train and No.1535 'Susan' all the way back to the Depot and parked our train safely undercover. The Hunslet Taylor shunter was used to park the poorly Class 12AR in the top shed and by Tuesday, Saki Kekana had the spark arrestors out and had prepared the engine for inspection.



Thanks to the professionalism of our Train Manager and Coach Controllers, and the wonderful co-operation of the drivers from TFR, the day was safely completed and none of the passengers were inconvenienced.

Many thanks to all involved.

3). DEPOT REPORT

Chemical-based weed eradication is being carried out on the track work.

Window glazing is being carried out by Hennie. This is a long term project to weather-proof the workshops.

4). MOTIVE POWER REPORT

Sandstone Estates' Garratt, the GMAM No.4079 'Lyndie Lou' has a team working on her to enable a boiler certificate to be obtained. Currently the regulator (the 'throttle') is being overhauled and is out of the boiler. Once the regulator has been overhauled and replaced, the locomotive will undergo hydraulic testing. This involves filling the boiler with water to 1¼ times operating pressure and checking for any leaks. The boiler has to retain this pressure for 30 minutes.



The GMAM's Regulator Chest – the individual covers have been removed but the sequentially operated double-beat steam valves are still in place. The valve in the foreground is the pilot valve which admits steam to both sides of the main double-beat valves – otherwise the driver wouldn't be able to get the regulator open against the steam pressure. All these valves will be removed and ground-in.

Class 15F No.3046 is almost complete thanks to Piet Labuscagne. On Monday the 14th December, he started to pressurize the boiler to identify any leaks. The boiler itself was leak free with only small leaks from external joints and unions. The tender has been moved closer to the engine and is just waiting for a new draw bar pin to be made.



Almost-engaged mechanical stoker of the Class 15F No.3046. The tender is almost fully engaged and so the loose mounted ascending coal-feed screw has been placed into the tunnel. There is still a gap because the inter-buffer springs between the locomotive and the tender need to be compressed before the new draw-bar pin can be installed.



Our 25NC 3472 has taken over the duties of the last trips of the year, that is the 16th and 19th of December and only requires the normal servicing and adjusting after each run.

5). ROLLING STOCK REPORT

Work has been done to the Kitchen Car and the electrical short to the fridge has been fixed.

The Lounge & Dining Car has had an internal refurbishment carried out for the Cherry Festival. This included an internal repaint, replacement of the water damaged floors and the fitting of new floor covering.

All the sleeper set coaches have now been converted to 220 volts mains current, getting rid of the old, unreliable and expensive inverters.

Coach 28332 is in the workshop having a bogie overhaul. It was discovered that the wheels on one bogie were worn out of the correct profile due to the brakes slightly binding. The corrective measures are to re-profile the wheels and correcting the brake rigging to the correct version.



The power car requires some work to sound proof the bulkhead between the passenger accommodation and the generator room as the generators can be quite deafening.

6). LIBRARY

The library is in progress slowly. All the drawings that were housed in the canteen have now been indexed and filed. The videos have been moved from the formal Club House and are on the process of being indexed.

If anyone has any books or memorabilia that they would like to donate to the Reefsteamers Library there is the space to house them.

The library will be a reference library where books and documents can be viewed on-site. They will not be lent out, so you can be assured the any donations will be safety stored for the foreseeable future.

7). MARKETING NEW (BY LES SMITH) :

There isn't much to add from my side, but the following may be of interest:

We have had an application to run a private charter to Groot Marico using steam - negotiations are under way. (Permission for 100% steam haulage to Groot Marico has since been declined – Lee Gates.)

Bookings for the Cherry Festival 2010 are coming along nicely with more than a third of the passenger space already sold.

I'm meeting with some of the Soccer World Cup organizers today (11/12/2009) with a view to provide a possible steam train service from Magaliesburg to NASREC and/or Park station. I will keep you posted.



There are still four 1st class and two standard class Compartments available on our New Year's Eve train. Come on members, let's fill the train.

Kind regards,
Les Smith
Marketing Manager – 2009.

There are no trips scheduled in January, with 4 scheduled for February 2010.

8). MEMBERSHIP :

I will be profiling some of our members so it will help you to understand why they are active members of Reefsteamers.

The first one is from Philipp Maurer who frequently comes all the way from his home in Switzerland to drive for us.

My Life Story: An Introduction to International Steam Preservation and Involvement .

By: Philipp Maurer



I was born 1971 in a town along the Lake Valley Railway in the middle of Switzerland. At the age of 4 years, this railway infected me with the railway virus. At 6 years, I knew already what work I would like to do, that is a driver on the Swiss National Railways (SBB). To reach this dream I had to work hard and do 10 months of Driver Training School. Fortunately, during all of this boring time, I had a desk next to the windows, where I could watch the many hundreds of daily trains. Whenever the "UNTERRISCHT" was boring, there was always a train visible to remind me why I was sitting there.

After the training, I had to study as a railway electrician, it was also necessary to learn a mechanical skill to become a driver at the SBB.

One day in 1987, during this apprenticeship, another trainee took me one day to a tree nursery railway. He had to try long and hard to get me there because in my mind, the nursery railway with a maximum gauge of 5 or 7 ¼ Inch was a 'garden railway'. At this time, I wasn't interested in this type of railway. But to my surprise, it was much more than a garden railway! In the workshop on the pit, there stood a South African Railways NGG 13 Garratt. What an amazing and huge engine!

From this time I joined the club and spent most of my Saturdays in the nursery railway workshop and worked on the Garratt. In 1991, I finished my studies and had to go to the army for 9 months. At this time army service was still required to get a study place at the driver's school. In 1992, I started with the study at the driver's school in Zurich. During the study time, I tried to keep the Saturdays off for the Garratt work. During the long Saturdays in the workshop, for a small group of us, the idea crystallized to visit the ancestral home of our Garratt. I successfully passed my drivers exam in September 1993.

Now I was ready for a holiday break and the destination was clear... South Africa, we were on our way!

We enjoyed the Union Limited for two weeks and added two more weeks to visit all the narrow gauge railways and standard gauge clubs in South Africa. This was not the last visit and I realized this already on the second day in South Africa. In 1998, after an 11 years long restoration period, the Garratt was nearly restored, as we celebrated the re-steaming of our Garratt. Our good old friend Roy Mitchell, chairman of the Apple Express Society in Port Elizabeth at the time (until his tragic passing) enjoyed this great event with us.

In the year 2000, I left the club because of internal political differences with the owners of the nursery. Today, the Garratt still waits for some important fine tuning to ensure a long preservation life without any major problems. In the same year, the Swiss National Railway was divided into a passenger and freight division. I chose to join the freight division because I like the night shifts, the heavy trains and besides, on freight trains you have no boring people just moaning all the time.



I also joined a new steam club, the DVZO. (I can't live without dirty, oily hands and steam.) In the past few years, the club turned out to be Switzerland's most important and premier preservation club and is similar in many ways to the Reefsteamers Association. The club has 7 steam locomotives, 1 vintage electric loco and 3 vintage diesel locomotives. We restore our own locomotives, coaches and wagons in our perfect workshop and always strives to preserve the true heritage of our railway, buildings and other assets to perfection.

Since the exit of steam on the South African Railways, China and other countries took over the former glory of the South African steam traction. The times have has changed again and only a few railways in those countries are still using steam power, as diesel and electric traction has taken over the main traction services. Today, steam traction is mainly used worldwide used for tourist and preservation trains. In all the years, my interest in South African steam got stronger and stronger. During my visits, I understood the enormous and unused potential of South African steam. To support the South African steam preservation movement, I now travel 2-5 times a year to South Africa. Year 2009 saw my 51st visit to this country. Whenever a hand is needed at Sandstone Estates or at Reefsteamers, and my time and financial accounts allow it, I would be there.

Some years ago the idea came up to write the steam driver's exam in South Africa along with my very good and long standing friend, Shaun Ackerman. In 2007, we wrote the exam successfully through Coen Pretorius. What a great feeling it was! Today, I'm the only non South African who has had the opportunity to write and pass the South African steam drivers licence. I must admit that I'm a bit proud to be a part of South African railway preservation.

This is not the end of my ambitions yet and I am positive we will go much further! Together we will bring South African steam back to its glory, but it is up to many people to get involved and help in this process. The few who are now active are not enough and it will all die if the various groups and individuals don't all stand together. There are many ideas and much potential. I will help to do the best I can to preserve the steam in South Africa along with everyone. So, maybe I will see you all on one of the Reefsteamers or Sandstone trains soon, because I will look out for you!

Don't forget that all the support is needed to reach the final goal! Your support can have different meanings. If you help with your own hands in the workshop, or donate some materials, tools, coal or money, everything would be welcome and necessary.

9). BIRTHDAYS

Sorry in missing out in last month's birthday announcements that it was Harry Cubitt's birthday on the 2nd November.

10). ENGAGEMENT

Congratulations to Riaan Coetzee and Tanya Noeth on their engagement.

Riaan is a loco minder for the club and his sister, Michelle, does coach controlling as well. Riaan and Tanya got engaged on 19th December 2009.

11). FROM THE BOARD

This is to inform you that Shaun Ackerman has resigned as Vice Chairman of Reefsteamers, because of personal reasons. He will continue to be a member of our club and will still be participating in club activities and footplate work as a 'normal member.' Shaun is just taking a bit of a break over December to renovate his home over the weekends and he will be back and 'Smudging' once again in the Depot in January.

In the interim, Coen Pretorius has been appointed as acting Vice-Chairman. Coen Pretorius will serve in this position until the AGM to be held in April 2010.

All communications concerning Reefsteamers matters, including crewing, must NOT be addressed to Shaun. Aidan McCarthy is currently handling Shaun's old job of rostering of the footplate crew and the support staff.

On behalf of the Reefsteamers Board, I would like to thank Shaun for the incredible amount of work that he has put into the depot and the steel-wheel stock over the last year.

Dennis Edgar has taken over the task of rostering the Coaching Staff.

Lee D. Gates

Club Secretary – Reefsteamers Association.



Just for a change a picture of two locomotives that Reefsteamers do not have.
They are the Friends of the Rail's Class 24 No 3664 followed by 19D No 2650 on a recent trip around Pretoria.

12). CONTACT DETAILS :

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