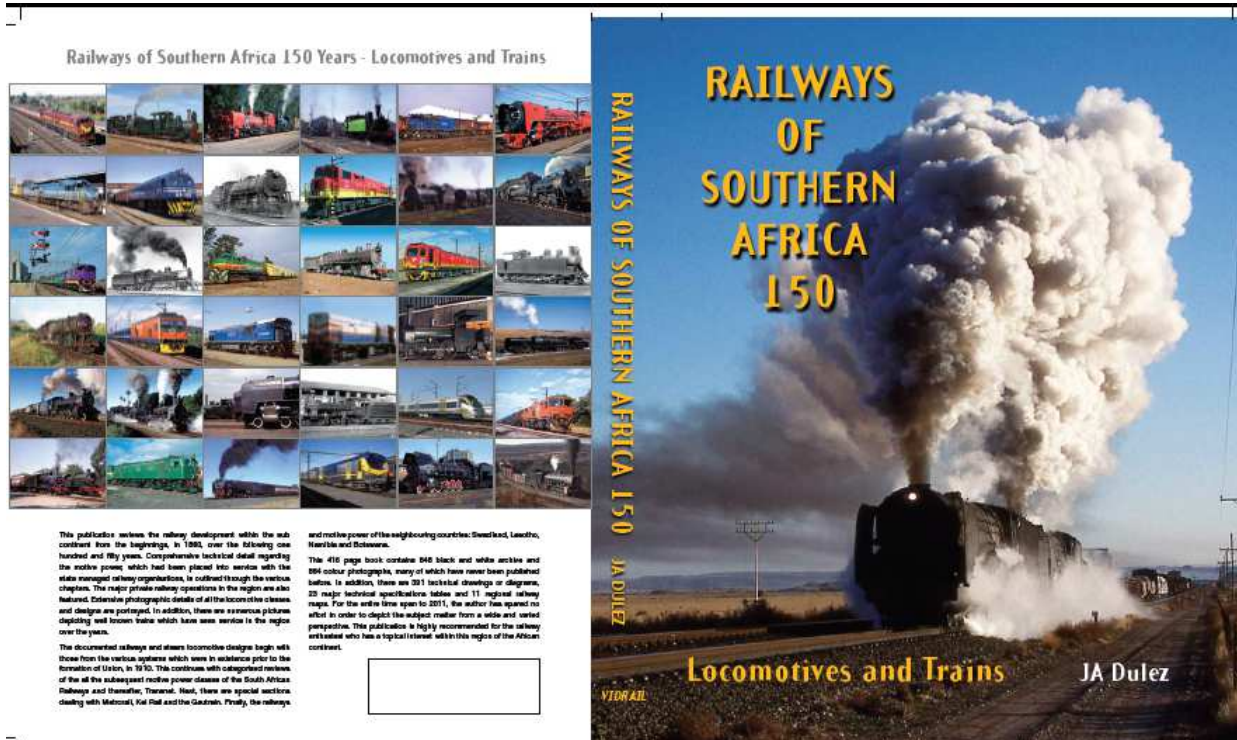


On Track

**RAILWAY SOCIETY OF
SOUTHERN AFRICA
REEF BRANCH NEWSLETTER
October 2012**

From the Editor



This is what is coming to all paid up RSSA Reef Branch Member Shortly

Jean Dulez apologises for the delay but some of the pages were rejected and the book is back at the printer for reprinting the faulty pages as soon as it is ready, you will be advised.

The RSSA Reef Branch Annual Photographic Competition.

Here are the results:

Overall winner (congratulations - great have a new trophy holder)

Peter Stowe - Slide - Double headed class 19D/19B at Lootsberg during the 1970s steam era

Digital

1 Class 24 departing Cullinan - winter morning June 2012 - David Benn

2 Class 15F silhouette at Slabberts (Cherry Festival 2011) - David Benn

3 Class 24 at Davsteel works, Cullinan June 2012 - David Benn

4 Class 34 diesels - Caledon Line - 2011 - Eugene Armer

Slide

2 Class 25 double headed condensers on freight at Biesiespoort, steam era 1970s - Peter Stowe

Congratulations to the other winners and thanks to David Benn for working the digital show for us.
Cheers

Jean Dulez

Jean was the judge as he was last year's winner.



The picture at the Abattoir cutting was taken on 10 June 2012 during Friends of the Rails photographic weekend

Rovos Rail

An elegant ride into South Africa's genteel past

By Sandra MacGregor, Saturday, March 3, 6:13 AM Washington Post

As the train pulls out of the station, and its tentative, sluggish chugs become confident clickety-clacks, it occurs to me that I have quite possibly made a terrible mistake.

I don't like trains. This is due mainly to my desire to get to any destination in the quickest way possible — and also to an unfortunate propensity for motion sickness.

Yet somehow, charmed by a friend's enthusiasm for locomotives, I have committed to spending the next 48 hours en route from Cape Town to Pretoria, South Africa, aboard Rovos Rail.

Luckily, before I can even begin to calculate the likelihood of a successful leap to the tracks, I make the acquaintance of Adam, our onboard sommelier, in the lounge car. He astutely suggests that my train trepidation might respond favourably to a glass of pinotage from a stellar South African winery.

Adam is not wrong. As the warmth of the wine runs through me, I sink back into a plush armchair and glance out the window in time to see the iconic Table Mountain recede in the distance as we begin cutting a serpentine path toward the lush, mountain-flanked vineyards of Paarl, one of South Africa's premier wine regions.

Maybe this antiquated form of transport does have something to offer, after all.

Rovos Rail is a beautiful anachronism: an authentically refurbished Edwardian-style train designed to take guests back in time as it meanders through some of South Africa's least-seen but most spectacular countryside, complete with excursions to two of the country's historical highlights. And although the voyage may seem slow to some — the trip from Cape Town to Pretoria takes only two hours by plane but two days via Rovos Rail — guests aboard the company's flagship train, the *Pride of Africa*, are more than happy to trade haste for history. After all, it's not every day that one gets to ride a time machine on tracks.

In operation since 1989, Rovos Rail has always been more about the journey than the destination. Owner Rohan Vos has translated a lifelong passion for the lost art of train travel into a railway company that aims to provide guests with a luxurious locomotive journey that, in the company's words, recaptures "the romance and atmosphere of a bygone era" of travel. To that end, Vos has visited scrap yards and salvaged train coaches dating from as far back as the 1920s. And it is in those exquisitely restored "rescues"

that guests travel across the country (or the continent; Rovos's longest trip is a 34-day voyage from Cape Town to Cairo). Trains are limited to 20 carriages and no more than 72 guests on each journey.

A few hours into the voyage, we gather with other passengers in the antique observation car; its enlarged windows and open-air balcony provide the perfect vantage point from which to view the majestic Hex River Mountains.

Among the highest in the Western Cape, the peaks are peppered with fynbos, a type of shrublike, flowering vegetation native to South Africa. Because this is one of the country's best fruit-growing regions, however, the mountains'

lower reaches have been planted with vineyards and fruit trees vying for sunlight and space.

Our interest in the scenery is momentarily replaced with a hankering for scones as tea is set out in the adjacent lounge car. "Don't you feel like you've stepped into a scene from that Agatha Christie classic, 'Murder on the Orient Express'?" asks a well-read guest, taking another sip of his tea while eyeing a slice of cheesecake.

"Well, my waistline's getting murdered," a woman responds ruefully as she reaches for another finger sandwich.

Oak-, mahogany- and cherry-panelled coaches, antique fixtures, handcrafted leather chairs and historic prints all conspire to subvert reality and transport passengers back to the early 20th century. Lulled by the motion of the train and too ensconced in our comfy seats to move, the rest of us lazily eye the snacks and cakes set out for tea and focus on summoning the strength to order a cocktail from the bar.

Just as the notion of a late afternoon nap begins to form in my mind, a startling change in the landscape draws me to the observation car once more.

I marvel with other passengers as we leave behind the verdant mountains of the Western Cape and head into the barren, arid heart of South Africa's desert region, known as the Great Karoo. Here, ranchland replaces vineyards, and striking, rocky, pockmarked mountains command the horizon. There are no roads through these mountains; our train and the occasional group of meerkats playing in the fields are the only traffic. What is there to do but order another cocktail and enjoy the view?

Come supper time, I am beginning to regret my pre-dinner cocktails when a glance at the tempting menu informs me that each of the meal's four courses is paired with a carefully selected South African wine. (Everything on Rovos, including alcohol, is included in the ticket price.)

Though I am no expert, the oohs and aahs coming from the guests at the next table as they scan the wine list tell me that I'm in for a treat. "It's like having your own personal wine tutelage," my vinifera-loving neighbours inform me.

As impressed as I am with the food and the wine, it's the Victorian-style dining car that has really captured my imagination. Lovely hand-carved teak pillars rise from the floor and fold gracefully

into arches toward the ceiling. The decor is set off beautifully by frilled cream-colored lamps suspended from the ceiling; they're well positioned to highlight the exquisitely laid-out tables that are set with Rovos Rail's privately commissioned and monogrammed china and silverware. But the most striking aspect of this epitome of elegance? It's we passengers, if I do say so myself. Although during the day our comfortable attire of shorts, T-shirts and sandals had seemed somewhat incongruous in the train's objet-d'art atmosphere, at dinner (having heeded Rovos's request for formal attire) we all look dazzling in evening gowns and suits, with a couple of men especially elegant in tuxedos.

The food does put up a good fight trying to outshine the passengers. The succession of sophisticated and beautifully plated courses confounds all expectations of what can be produced in the confines of a train galley. The key distinction between Rovos and comparable epicurean experiences I've had is generosity. Tonight, after a succulent main course of lobster, our waiters actually go around the dining car asking guests if they would like seconds. Why, oh why, did I have to fill up on wine?

On this antiquated form of transport, because there are no radios or televisions and the use of cellphones and laptops is strictly confined to guests' suites, conversation and constellation identification are popular after-dinner pastimes. The evening's celestial display is particularly breathtaking as we continue through the hauntingly desolate Great Karoo, home to the largest telescope in the Southern Hemisphere and one of the best places on the planet for stargazing. The night sky is burning brightly, and a group of South Africans ("We decided to be tourists in our own country," they told me earlier) takes some of us more far-flung tourists out on the observation deck to teach us the Afrikaans names for a few of the Southern Hemisphere's constellations. Thanks to their enthusiastic guidance, I catch my first sighting of Suiderkruis (the Southern Cross) and Drie Susters (Three Sisters). That night, under the influence of the preternaturally bright stars and the deep, throaty cadence of Afrikaans, I fall in love with South Africa.

Pining slightly for Ursa Major (which can be seen only in the Northern Hemisphere), I retire to my antique, wood-panelled sleeper car, opening the window just a crack to let in some desert air (windows that open are a rarity in sleeper coaches). At night, the train slows to a sluggish chug, and I can't escape the sensation that I'm in an outrageously elegant, albeit large, perambulator being rocked to sleep. It is one of the best slumbers of my life.

During the day, with the stars out of sight, guests' entertainment needs are met by two short off-train excursions, both of which, in keeping with Rovos's ethos, also provide an admiring nod to history.

More Victorian period piece than functioning town, Matjiesfontein was once an important rest stop for travellers riding the Cape Government Railways.

Now, however, set out alone on the plains of the Great Karoo, it gives the impression of an otherworldly oasis. A very real and refreshing beer at the pub in the Lord Milner Hotel (which claims to be the country's last authentic vestige of Victoriana) confirms that the town is not a mirage. We are joined in our departure by a herd of curious springbok, and as they run alongside the train, I can almost believe that their stares reflect envy at our speed.

Our next excursion, the town of Kimberley, is a dangerous place for anyone thinking of getting engaged. Diamond sellers abound in this town, which once was the centre of the country's diamond rush and home to one of De Beers's largest mines. The tour of the former mine and diamond museum is interesting, but the real treat (for those not afraid of heights) is a trip to the rim of the seemingly bottomless "Big Hole," which was made by prospectors nearly a century ago and claims to be the largest hand-dug hole in the world.

For bird lovers, one of the most exciting sights might be a few miles outside Kimberley. Within minutes of our departure from the town, crew members walk through the train announcing "Flamingos in 10 minutes.

Flamingos in 10 minutes." We all head to the observation car to get the best view. Though we have been briefed beforehand about the spectacle that awaits us — Kamfers Dam hosts one of

only six breeding sites in the world for the lesser flamingo — nothing has prepared us for the sight of thousands upon thousands of pink birds preening just feet from the train. “I’m covered in goosies!” says the passenger next to me. And once I establish what goosies are (a South African expression for goose bumps), I confirm that I, too, am covered.

Despite the remarkable excursions, the true homage to history is Rovos itself. As our train moves forward to Pretoria, I can’t help wanting to stay back in time. So as night falls on our second day and our trip nears its end, I head out to the observation deck, a finely aged Scotch in hand, and revel in the beauty of the ancient stars as a nostalgia for days past welcomingly enfolds me.

PRASA

New Metro Stock

The bids were submitted in line with a request for proposals, which was issued on April 19 and closed on September 30.

Prasa confirmed that the following companies and/or consortia had made submissions: CAF, of Spain; Bombardier, of Canada; China South Rail; China North Rail; Gibela Rail Transportation, which is a French consortium comprising Alstom and Actom; Dudula Rail, a consortium comprising ABB South Africa and Stagler of Switzerland; and CSR/Wictra, consortium comprising CSR, of China, and Wictra of South Africa.

Prasa said it would “immediately begin” with the evaluation of the proposals from rolling stock manufacturers, adding that it anticipated “appointing the preferred bidder by the end of November”.

Prasa’s 20-year fleet renewal programme was a R123-billion project to manufacture and supply 7 224 new commuter coaches to the Metrorail commuter service. Around R14.5-billion would also be spent on infrastructure upgrades and the construction of new depots.

Prasa CEO **Tshepo Lucky Montana** said at the launch of the process that bidders would have to adhere to government’s set localisation target of 65%.

The preferred bidder would be required to set up a factory and supply chain in South Africa, employ local people and transfer skills to Prasa.

“The project will not only change the focus of public transport in South Africa to rail, but it also is the largest project of its kind in the country, with the potential to create 65 000 jobs over the next 20 years and revive the local failing rail engineering sector,” Montana noted.

The current timeline stated that the first trains were expected to arrive between July and December 2015.

Interesting 3 Chinese companies involved in the bidding.

Transnet Freight Rail

SOUTH AFRICA: CSR Zhuzhou Electric Locomotive has won a 2.54bn yuan (3.4 Billion Rand) contract to supply dual-voltage electric freight locomotives to Transnet from late 2013, beating eight other domestic and international bidders.

The four-axle 3.1 MW general freight locomotives will have a top speed of 100 km/h, equipped to work under 3 kV DC and 25 kV 50 Hz electrification.

CSR Zhuzhou said the deal announced on September 11 is its first contract to supply electric locomotives to Africa, and one of the largest locomotive export orders to be won by a Chinese firm. The company sees Africa as an important market, especially South Africa where more than 55% of Transnet’s 2 100 electric locomotives are over 35 years old.

The Transnet contract includes local production requirements, with the first locomotives to have 60% South African content. CSR Zhuzhou has invested in the development of 1 067 mm gauge bogies and dual-voltage technology, and sees South Africa as a possible base for supplying customers across southern Africa. It is also seeking to enter the electric multiple-unit market.

BEIJING, Sept. 10 (Xinhua) -- China's largest train manufacturer, CSR Corp. Ltd., on Monday announced its subsidiary company has secured a contract worth 400 million U.S. dollars (3.4 Billion Rand) to supply freight electric locomotives to South African logistics firm Transnet. The contract won by CSR Zhuzhou Electric Locomotive Co., Ltd. set a precedent for Chinese train manufacturers in the continent of Africa, one of the world's fastest-growing rail markets. The electric locomotive supplied by CSR can haul freight trains at a maximum speed of 100 kmph.

According to the agreement, CSR's subsidiary will transfer technology concerning electric locomotive manufacturing to South Africa and more than 60 percent of the parts and components will be produced in South Africa.

The deal's first locomotive is expected to be delivered by the end of 2013.

As demand from developed countries stalls amid the current economic slowdown, CSR is increasingly targeting overseas market for business opportunities.

The value of existing overseas orders held by CSR stood at about 1.7 billion U.S. dollars after it won contracts from Malaysia, Turkey and Singapore in the first half of this year.

Speculating that this is for the 95 off class 20E dual voltage loco tender.

Your editor is very surprised that there has been no S African announcement about these a month after it was in the Chinese business papers and I also asked the question would Union Carriage be involved in the manufacture.

Not yet; everyone concerned has been very cagey about the entire tender; UCW , who also quoted, would not even divulge whether it was to be a Bo-Bo or Co-Co loco, but I think Bo-Bo. UCW may well end up doing the final assembly anyhow. JM seems to think these will be supplied with Siemens electrical equipment Jean Dulez

Around and About

On Engineering News there was a report of the redevelopment of the old derelict potato building in Newtown Johannesburg

And it included the statement

A walkway and historic railway bridge will link Newtown Junction with Museum Africa and the Market Theatre

I am not aware of a 'Historic Railway Bridge' in that area

In the middle sixties we used to shunt the old market sidings, the motive power always being an S class. I can distinctly remember a pedestrian bridge which used to span the various sidings, perhaps this is the same bridge that they are referring to?

Regards,

Les Smith

Thanks Les If I look at Google Earth I can see one or may be two pedestrian bridges at the back of the Africa Museum

Cape

JOHANNESBURG (miningweekly.com) - Transnet is compiling the first-ever distributed power train for manganese, made up of 208 wagons.

The train will be loaded at the newly completed rail siding of black-controlled emerging manganese miner Tshipi é Ntle's new project, near Kathu, in the Northern Cape.

"It's the train of the future," Tshipi é Ntle CEO **Finn Behnken** told *Mining Weekly Online* on the sidelines of last week's Metal Bulletin Events' fifth Ferro-Alloy conference in Johannesburg.

Transnet Freight Rail has opted to compile the train to increase the volumes of manganese exports from Port Elizabeth and ultimately Coega.

"That train will be compiled at our railway siding," said Behnken.

Struggle veteran **Saki Macozoma** is chairperson of Tshipi é Ntle, in which the black economically empowered Ntsimbintle Mining owns 50.1% and the ASX-listed and Pallinghurst-linked Jupiter Mines owns 49.9%. Pallinghurst is headed by mining luminary **Brian Gilbertson**.

The distributed power train makes use of the same technology that Transnet deploys down the iron-ore railway line from Sishen to Saldanha, on which 342-wagon trains travel.

Typically, the trains on the manganese general freight line to Port Elizabeth have been shorter, predominantly consisting of 104 wagons.

Transnet is poised to do the once-off trial run with a train made up of two 104-wagon sets with locomotives at the front and rear.

The locomotives communicate by radio signal with one drive-control unit managing the power.

Although the long train will be loaded with ore, it will not be Tshipi's ore, the first of which is only scheduled to be available from the company's Tshipi Borwa open pit project towards the end of 2012.

JOHANNESBURG (miningweekly.com) – The first distributed power train carrying a load of manganese was expected to arrive in Port Elizabeth on Friday evening, completing its 1 085 km maiden trip, said emerging manganese miner Tshipi é Ntle CEO **Finn Behnken**.

The test train, which left Tshipi's new rail siding at its Tshipi Borwa manganese mine, in Kathu, in the Northern Cape, on Thursday, transported over 13 000 t of manganese, on 208 CR wagons.

The total weight of 16 640 t, spread over a total length of 2.23 km, was pulled by 18 diesel-electric repetition locomotives evenly located across the front, middle and end of the train.

The radio-distributed power technology driving the train was currently used on the Sishen-Saldanha iron-ore rail line.

I would have thought that from Kimberly to PE they would use electrics but maybe the line electric reticulation is not up to supplying the power required for the 18? Electric Locomotives .Ed

Mozambique

According to Portos e Caminhos de Ferro de Moçambique (CFM) chairman Rosário Mualeia, quoted by the paper Notícias, shortage of rolling stock is hampering the company in meeting demands for goods transport. Extensive repairs have been made to the various lines in recent years but the railway continues to operate below capacity due to limitations imposed by non-availability of rolling stock. Even wagons left at outlying stations have been recovered and refurbished, but CFM has never been able to match growing demand for freight transport by countries in the region.

At a recent three-way meeting in Maputo involving the rail operators of Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland in Maputo, Mualeia on behalf of CFM made a commitment to improve the levels of service, the aim being to attract more traffic to and from neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe

HARARE (miningweekly.com) – In its current state, Zimbabwe's railway network would not be able to accommodate the anticipated growth in the country's coal sector, Zimbabwe Ministry of Transport, Communications and Infrastructural Development principal director **Mufaro Gumbie** said this week.

With sufficient financial assistance, Zimbabwe's coal production was expected to reach seven-million tons a year, from two-million tons forecast for 2012.

"The rail system, as it is, will not be able to cope with the movement of the quantity of coal that will be required," Gumbie told *Mining Weekly Online* at this year's Zimbabwe Mining Indaba, in Harare.

Gumbie said most of Zimbabwe's 2 583 km railway network required rehabilitation, which would cost \$1.14-billion, while upgrading and replacing rolling stock would cost \$870-million. However, the funding shortfall for infrastructure development continued, with the country's revenue reaching only \$62-million in 2009.

At the peak of its operations in 1991, the National Railways of Zimbabwe moved about 14.4-million tons of freight, but 18 years later, this dropped to 2.5-million tons.

The decline was attributed to a lack of availability of locomotives and wagons, vandalised electrification systems and unserviceable railway signal systems.

The country's roads were also in a dire state and Gumbie said Zimbabwe's funding requirement for road maintenance in 2012 was \$200-million, but that only \$35-million was allocated for this purpose.

Similarly, the country required \$2-billion for rehabilitation projects of roads, but a mere \$209-million was set aside for projects.

Gumbie said that the ongoing rail and road infrastructure constraints created prospects for public-private partnerships. "There are opportunities for the private sector in rehabilitation and development of infrastructure."

Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe infrastructure projects division acting director **Alex Machimbirike** told delegates that \$1.5-million had been raised for feasibility studies for the Harare-Beitbridge and Harare-Chirundu toll road projects.

Studies were completed for the Harare-Chirundu road and would soon start for the Harare-Beitbridge road.

A further \$22-million had been disbursed on the dualisation of Harare-Skyline road and Harare-Norton road, including the construction of two bridges.

For the rehabilitation of the national railway network \$28-million had been spent, Machimbirike said.

He added that to mobilise resources for infrastructure development in Zimbabwe, its financial sector would have to forge alliances with external strategic partners with stronger financial capabilities and direct access to deep financial markets.

"Government has taken a proactive stance in financing infrastructure and is further encouraged to speed up the conclusion of public-private-partnerships legislation and the regulatory framework required to attract private sector investment," Machimbirike indicated.

Further to my report from Vic Falls last week, Geof Calvert managed to catch the southbound train the following day and attached is his photo of RRL Grindrod 26-01 and 26-02 leaving Plumtree station.

Chas

Kenya

Minister of transport Dr Harrison Mwakyembe told press representatives in Dar es Salaam on 6 September that a team of 70 technical experts from China is in Tanzania studying the Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (Tazara) in detail, to establish the problems afflicting the ailing organisation, which is described as being "on the verge of collapse". A team of similar size is in Zambia, looking at the problems on that side of the border. Both teams are to submit their reports by June 2013.

According to Mwakyembe, the Chinese government has donated 90 goods wagons and six new locomotives which are to be handed over soon.

RSSA Visit to RRL Grindrod Pretoria

RRL Holdings (Pty) Ltd was founded in 2001 by Ted Zulu as a black owned rail business. On the 1st January 2009, Grindrod Limited acquired a 50% shareholding in the business and the business was renamed RRL Grindrod. The business continues to be black owned through Solethu's empowerment credentials. This transaction has created a number of synergies and competitive advantages for the group.

In 2009 the company moved into their present location a disused wire pulling building at the old Iscor works in Pretoria. Out of this works RRL Grindrod provide the following services

Locomotive Leasing

RRL Grindrod can provide fully maintained locomotives that can be leased to our clients as per clients specifications. RRL Grindrod has a large fleet of fully maintained locomotives that have been leased to a number of mining clients and state railways within the African Continent. RRL Grindrod has a locomotive maintenance team based on site at our clients premises to ensure that our locomotives are operational on a 24/7 basis and there downtime is kept to a minimum. RRL Grindrod is willing to invest in new locomotives or build them according to our client's specifications and provide a leasing alternative to our clients.

Locomotive Operations

RRL Grindrod provides a full operational team for specific client requirements that comprise drivers, shunters and general workers. They provide the entire scope of services from loading and offloading of wagons, tippler operations, shunting, short haul and building of train sets.

Building and Refurbishment of Locomotives

RRL have a 3000 square metre facility on the outskirts of Pretoria to build locomotives for their clients. We build new locomotives according to client specifications and refurbish existing locomotives. RRL technical team has over 100 years of cumulative experience in building and refurbishing locomotives.

Locomotive Maintenance

RRL Grindrod has maintenance contracts with a number of mining entities and with State Railways across Africa whereby RRL maintain locomotives and ensure that all major overhauls are completed in a timely manner.

On Saturday the 21 July a party of 20 RSSA members were kindly invited to visit the works. Prior to getting a welcome from the works manager Deon Lourens, in the boardroom, we were able to walk around and view some of stock of diesel locomotives that were on the yard outside the works.

We saw the 5 of the 12 Queensland diesel locomotives that had been bought and shipped in from Australia (one was inside with a new coat of red paint). This was amazing seeing that they only arrived on the Monday.

In the board room were addressed by Deon who outlined the company's history and operations. RRL started 12 years ago as a spare parts supplier to the rail industry gradually growing until 2009 when Grindrod Limited (a shipping and freight logistics company) took a 50% interest in the company which was renamed RRL Grindrod. This was a perfect marriage as the business of building and leasing locomotives is a capital intensive business and a partner with deep pockets is needed. (With 70 locomotives at say R5 million apiece is a capital investment of R350 million). The company has grown dramatically in the last two years.

RRL's main markets are the DRC, Sierra Leone, Mozambique and a number of local mines.

RRL is not in competition with Transnet, their competitors are ARTS, Sheltam and Saflog, though RRL is not in opposition with them as they co-operate when the situation arises.

The main focus is to keep the customer happy.

In the Pretoria works there are 3 bays, the first is for stores the second is the new build line and the third is for rebuilding second hand locomotives. The new build line has a capacity of building

one locomotive per week but at present the production is lower as locomotives are only built to order and client's specification.

As well as building 3,000hp mainline locomotives a new design of shunting locomotive is in the progress of being built. These are much smaller than the conventional shunting locomotive (as seen outside the workshop which is a 1,500hp 120ton shunting locomotive from Richards Bay). These are type R7I three axle locomotives designed to be coupled together and operate as one unit. Instead of a large (expensive) 1,500hp engine they are powered by 750kW generator sets (in the two units being built they are Caterpillar units). The advantage instead of a mainline unit being out of use for up to two months the gen set can be replaced in a day and the gen sets are normally widely available.

The model numbering system is typically RL3SCC which stands for RL RRL Grindrod Locomotive 3 (3000hp) S (single cab) C (cape gauge) C (Co-Co wheel arrangement). However every locomotive has 3 numbers, serial number (if new built RRL number) if rebuilt (keeps the manufacturer's number). It will also have a model number (as above) and finally will have a locomotive number.

Any new or rebuilt locomotive is line trialled with full loads and at speed prior to being put into use. This currently takes place near Brits or Welkom. The Sierra Leone locomotive will be tested at Welkom next week.

Of the 33 locomotives purchased from Queensland Railways 13 have come to RRL they are 6 x 2600 class 6 x 1700 class diesels and 3 x electric units 25kV units. The 1700 came by road and the 2600 came under their own power. Though they appear faded and rusty on the outside they are in excellent mechanical and electrical condition and as well had been modernised in 2001 and 2002. When off loaded they were filled with oil water and fuel started (obviously brake tested) and the coupled together and driven up to Pretoria.

The interesting thing about the journey was that they were routed via Swaziland. The reason for this is that there is a tunnel just outside Durban which has been closed to diesel traffic. So as the coupler height is 100 mm lower on these locomotives than the TFR standard they could not be coupled to a TFR electric unit so they went the long route round.

As before the units were refurbished and modernised with Brightstar traction control. One of the problems facing RRL was when the units went down due to the control system problem it took two days till the corrections were sent from the USA. To overcome this RRL were developing their own control system.

The whole business relies on a good skilled and motivated workforce which they had and were happy to have many ex Transnet artisans working for them.

One of the new products they were developing were underground mining locomotives. RRL believed in using applicable technology systems that were fit for purpose and not over engineered which would add to the cost of the unit.

A couple of their clients (Kumba & Asmang) used 3 double cab locomotives to move 80 hoppers and they had now been persuaded to try single cab double units with lower power (still sufficient to move 80 loaded wagons).

Two loadouts at Kumba were too low to have the normal locomotive pass underneath and the plan was to lift up the loadouts to allow the locomotives to pass underneath instead of propelling and then running around to the head of the train. But RRL instead of Kumba paying R600 Million to raise the loadouts persuaded Kumba to try out two of RRL's shunting locomotives specially modified by reducing the locomotive height by 1 meter thus saving a large amount of capital expenditure.

At 1 km per hour a 3000hp locomotive is only using 70hp.

The main line locomotives supplied to Africa are normally EMD powered units the reason is that these are robust and reliable units which work 24 hours a day 7 days a week and the engine is never stopped. The latest RRL design of main line locomotives will be suitable for other makes of engines including Caterpillar units but these are not in favour as they high speed units. Also they

currently use DC traction motors as they are more suited to African use. AC has only an advantage below 15 kph and most African lines can operate above this speed. As well up to 20ton axle loads there is no advantage as the 30KN output is the limit at 25% adhesion.

Vale in Mozambique have 15 locomotives that RRL will now maintain and new workshop is being built.

Canopies are now subcontracted to make more space for more valuable production.

In the back of the shop was an under frame fabrication, the welded frames then move forward into 6 assembly stations. The total build time for a new mainline locomotive is 12 weeks; 4 weeks frame fabrication, 6 weeks assembly and 2 weeks testing

The rebuilds are more difficult to give a time completion as the amount of work (time) cannot be predicted. But they can be bought for low price and even spending R 5 million they can be leased out for nearly the price of a new locomotive.

A wheel bay is being installed for wheel profiling just in front of the engine rebuild area and behind is the storage area for spare parts ready for refurbishing to install in a rebuild.

The RSSA Reef Branch is grateful to the Directors and Managers of RRL Grindrod for permitting us the visit their works and are hopeful we may repeat the event at some future date.

Stewart Currie

RRL Locomotive List

RRL No.	RRL Serial No.	Date	Type	Current Location
1101	004/4-2008	6-2011	NGT26CuN	AML Sierra Leone
1102	1/3	7-2011	NGT26CuN	AML Sierra Leone
1103	2/3	7-2011	NGT26CuN	AML Sierra Leone
1104	3/3	7-2011	NGT26CuN	AML Sierra Leone
	L11 0001 ?	x-2011	?	?
LC9-2	L11 0002 ?	x-2011	?	Assmang Kumani
	L11G0003	7-2011	RL30DCC-1	Kumba Kolomela
1105	L11G0004	7-2011	RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1106	L11G0005	7-2011	RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1107	L11J0006	9-2011	RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1108	L11J0007	9-2011	RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1109	L11J0008	9-2011	RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1110	L11J0009	9-2011	RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1111	L11L0010 (?)	11-2011	RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1112	L11L0011 (?)	11-2011	RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1113			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1114			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1115			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1116			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1117			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1118			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1119			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1120			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1121			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1122			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1123			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
1124			RL30SCC-2	AML Sierra Leone
CC1101		5-2011		CFCO Congo-Brazzaville

CC1102		x-2011		CFCO Congo-Brazzaville
CC1103		x-2011		CFCO Congo-Brazzaville
CC1104		x-2011		CFCO Congo-Brazzaville

SECOND HAND PURCHASES

RRL Number	Former Number	Type	Date purchased	Current Location
3301	33.023 ?	U20C	11-2010	Welkom – Maputo
3302	33.026 ?	U20C	11-2010	Maputo
3303	33.036 ?	U20C	11-2010	Maputo
3304	33.046 ?	U20C	11-2010	Maputo
3305	33.058 ?	U20C	11-2010	Maputo
?	ISCOR 69 (33.462)	U20C	Before 01-2008	Stored Pretoria
?	SASOL 4 (34. 486)	U26C	5-2011	Stored Pretoria
3501	35.300 ?	GT18	08-2007	CFCO
3502	35.323 ?	GT18	08-2007	CFCO
3503	35.344 ?	GT18	08-2007	CFCO
3504	35.	GT18		CFCO
3505	35.	GT18		CFCO
3506	35.	GT18		CFCO
3507	35.	GT18		Assmang, Black Rock
To be 3508 ?	35.321	GT18		Stored Pretoria
To be 3509 ?	35.616	GT18		Stored Pretoria
To be 3510 ?	35.658	GT18		Stored Pretoria
3601	36.252	SW1002	08-2007	Welkom
3901	39.251 (37.010)	GT26		Assmang, Kumani
9101	91.012	UM6B		Welkom
9102	91.017	UM6B		Welkom
9103	91.003 or 91.016	UM6B		Welkom
9104	91.003 or 91.016	UM6B		Hernic, Brits
9105	91.009	UM6B		Stored Pretoria
RB 201	31.009	U12B	5-2011	Welkom
-	31.025	U12B	5-2010	Stored Pretoria
-	31.041	U12B	5-2010	Stored Pretoria
DH-01	-	0-6-0DH		AML Sierra Leone
-	CFM D-309	GT22		Stored Pretoria
-	CFM D-410	AD26C		Stored Pretoria

Note: 3301-05 locos are as reported sold by Transnet, renumbering order not known

AUSTRALIAN LOCOS with provisional purchasers

3 x 3100 Class B-B-B electric 25kV, Comeng/Hitachi 1986

3101 RRL
3102 RRL
3103 RRL

13 x 2600 Class Goninan/GE U22C rebuilt as C22-MMi 2000/2002

2600 2500-12/83-58 RRL
2601 2500-12/83-59 ARTS
2602 2500-01/84-60 RRL
2603 2500-02/84-61 RRL
2604 2500-03/84-62 ARTS
2605 2500-04/84-63 ARTS
2606 2500-05/84-64 RRL
2607 2500-06/84-65 ARTS
2608 2500-07/84-66 RRL
2609 2500-08/84-67 ARTS
2610 2500-09/84-68 ARTS
2611 2500-10/84-69 RRL
2612 2500-11/84-70 ARTS

3 x 2100 Class Clyde/EMD GL26C

2111D 71-722 1971 SAFLOG
2116D 72-722 1972 SAFLOG
2123F 72-751 1973 SAFLOG

14 x 1720 Class Clyde GL18C

1721D 66-503 1966* SAFLOG
1729D 66-511 1966* SAFLOG
1739D 67-521 1967 SAFLOG
1740D 67-522 1967 SAFLOG
1742D 67-524 1967 SAFLOG
1748D 67-562 1967* RRL
1755D 66-635 1968 SAFLOG
1757D 66-637 1968 RRL
1766D 69-683 1969 SAFLOG
1767D 69-684 1969 RRL
1768D 69-685 1969* RRL
1769D 69-686 1970* SAFLOG
1772D 70-689 1970 RRL
1775D 70-692 1970* RRL

Erroneously reported as 1727 which is confirmed
as still in Australia

* confirmed from photos from Durban

The 20 junkers, (14 CL18C/3 GL26C/3 B-B-B electrics) can only be viewed as rebuild core, all came out of dead line storage, in the case of some of the GL18C, several years storage, hence the decrepit appearance. These locos will all require varying degrees of rebuild or refurbishment.

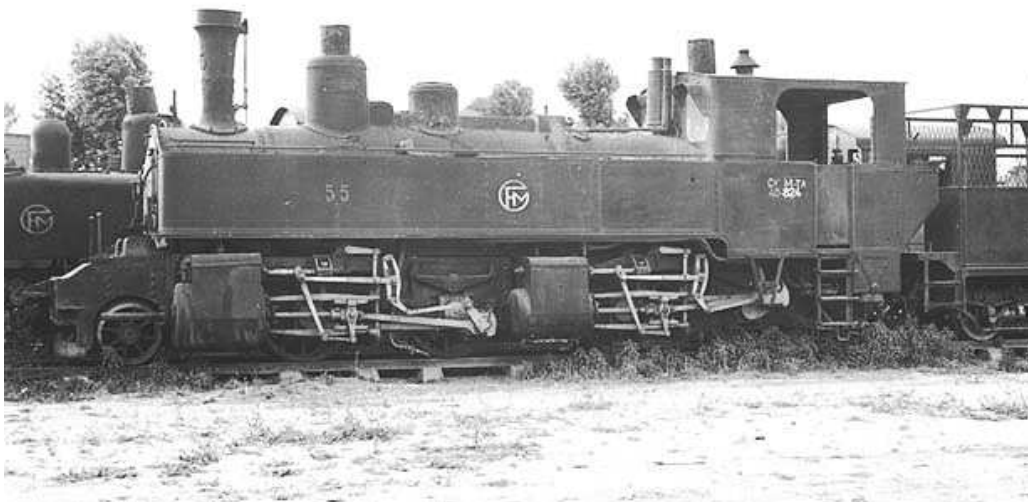
It has been assumed in Australia that all of the confidentiality agreements and secrecy concern the 13 U22C/C22-MMi. These units were either in use at the beginning of 2012, or had been mothballed, with the exception of a couple that were sidelined requiring repair, all can be considered goers. When rebuilt in 2000/2002 they were fitted with GE BrightStar electronics. In retrospect this conversion may not be considered overly successful, the Class has experienced ongoing electrical and electronic problems, and was not particularly liked by staff

John Middleton

Odds and ends



The railways here traditionally used Mallets but 59-801 was a 2-6-0 + 0-6-2 Garratt built by St. Leonard in 1925. It was out of use when it was photographed by Charles Small:



Like Eritrea, Madagascar was 'Mallet country', Durrant's book suggested that about 50 were supplied here. Charles Small took these pictures around 1955 by which time dieselisation was complete. These pictures are all from [our Safari Steam CD-ROM](#):

40-824 (formerly 55) was bought second hand from the Rhätische Bahn in Switzerland when it was electrified (a 2-8-0 from this railway is also shown in Thailand in [our Tiger Steam CD-ROM](#)). This 2-4-4-0T Mallet was built by SLM in 1902.

Letters to the Editor

Thanks for 'On Track'

With reference to John Parker's account of his latest travels to the UK, I have to agree with him (having been there in 2010 and 2011) that it's a very different country from the one I left thirty years ago.

Obviously, it depends on the town in which you are staying, but I tended to feel a little out of place speaking English !

Re his visit to Didcot, he says that there is no indication whether the erstwhile G.W.R. Brown Bouveri Gas Turbine No. 18000 will ever run again. I somehow doubt it as, to the best of my knowledge, the locomotive is an empty shell, with next to nothing in the 'engine room'. (innards long presumed scrapped) . Having seen it working whilst painted in black (yes, I am that old) , I must say I think it looks much better in Brunswick green. BUT THEN, EVERYTHING LOOKS BETTER IN BRUNSWICK GREEN !

Regards

Dennis Moore

RSSA Reef Branch

The August meeting was Digital Movie show of a number of clips of Switzerland that he had down loaded from the internet. They were of Swiss heritage steam, narrow gauge, rack railways, paddle steamers, as well as main line steam (Swiss, Austrian and French. The piesta résistance was a French 141R in steam in pristine condition.

The October meeting on the 31 October will be a presentation by Peter Stowe on railway accidents.

Teaser

Last month's teaser if you recall was a picture from the RRL website of an ugly diesel locomotives and I received two answers, the first from Nick Twynham.

Hi Stewart, That green loco looks as though it was a Russian built loco and used either in Russia or one of the former Eastern bloc states, I have to admit it's a pretty ugly looking loco except maybe the colour but even that's pretty awful.

As an aside I visited a client and they share a building with a firm who imports vehicles and standing outside where two huge trucks, I asked where they were from and the guard said Ukraine and he said that the SADF were apparently buying these he said there were more on the way at Durban docks.

Anyway cheers for now.

Nick Twynham

Hi Stewart,

Wish your quiz question had a R1000 prize attached to it!

The diesel in the picture is a class GKD3B Co-Co standard-gauge heavy diesel-electric shunting/mining system loco built at the CSR Ziyang loco factory in Sichuan, China. This type first

appeared around 7 or 8 years ago and for China relatively few have been built - probably not more than 20. The loco in the picture appears to be 0001 - this would have been the first built. The GKD in the loco classification essentially stands for the Chinese for "Industry-Mine-Electric" with the "Electric" being the "Electric" in diesel-electric.

The photo looks to have been taken at the Ziyang works where the loco was built. I'm overseas at present - if I was home I may just be able to tell you where the loco is working in China! Probably not of great interest to SA enthusiasts though!

The CSR website may list the technical details for the GKD3B if anyone is interested.

Cheers,

Bruce Evans

Ask a question of our knowledgeable readers and an answer is forthcoming. Well done Bruce I will put you prize in the post as soon as can borrow the Reef Branch cheque book

This month's teaser is simple. Where was this picture taken?



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