

READERS' REPORTS

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Contributions for this section should be sent to the Editorial Office, with the following exceptions:

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Contributions which are primarily photographic in nature should all be sent to the Editorial Office to give the best choice of material for covers and the World Steam photo gallery etc. Similarly historical articles and features should be sent to the Editor. The Editor's contact details are inside the front cover.

AFRICA

ANGOLA

The Benguela Railway (CFB) was famous for the extensive use of wood-burning Garratts. The civil war from 1975 to 2002 destroyed almost all the lines but they have been rebuilt with Chinese finance. The reconstructed CFB again connects Angola with the rest of the cape-gauge network of southern Africa.

A landmark event in 2019 was the first train to cross Africa from coast to coast. It was run by Rovos Rail, starting in Dar-es-Salaam, travelling via the TAZARA, ZRL (Zambia) and SNCC (DR Congo). The enthusiast will note that a number of steam locomotives have been preserved, and others survive in the remoter parts of the CFB.

The LCGB is offering a railfan tour to Angola in July 2020.

The Rovos Rail tour train is seen on the final approach to Lobito, crossing the new river bridge at Catumbela on 30th July 2019, hauled by 2355 and 2359 (Clyde-EMD, 1970 and 1972).



For tourism, the CFB has restored a historic train of coaches built in the 1930s. It is seen on 30th July 2019 hauled by one of the U20C locomotives delivered in 1983 from GE in Brazil.

Angola text and photographs by Geoff Warren and Elmar Pfannerstill

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Above: CFB 01 GENERAL MACHADOS (Hunslet 847/1904) was purchased for the construction of the CFB. It is now plinthed outside the old Lobito station.

Right: The last remains of the steam era linger on at the former locomotive depot of Luena (formerly Luso) on 3rd August 2019.

Below Right: At Munhango, there is the last remaining graveyard of steam locos. It is thought that CFB 324 (Beyer Peacock 6615/1930) had steamed its last in the early 1980s.

Below: Glimpsed from the window as we passed on 2nd August 2019, this wrecked train stands in the bush, where it was probably a victim of the civil war.

