



David Shepherd's '15F' 4-8-2 No. 3052 'Avril' is piloted by sister locomotive No. 3046 on its debut main line run, photographed from a 1953 Chipmunk aircraft, in which the photographer was chasing the train. NIEL SWART

SHEPHERD'S LAST ENGINE STEAMS AGAIN IN AFRICA

THE LAST steam locomotive owned by artist David Shepherd has returned to main line operation in South Africa after eight years.

Presented to Mr Shepherd by Spoornet (South African Railways) in 1991, the Class '15F' 4-8-2, No. 3052, was placed in the care of the Sandstone Heritage Trust and main line operator Reefsteamers, in preference to bringing it to Britain where

its 3ft 6in gauge would preclude operation.

Withdrawn in 2008 with boiler problems, the locomotive has undergone a nine-month overhaul at Reefsteamers' Germiston depot, including a full retube. It received its new three-year boiler certificate following a steam test on May 9.

It made its main line debut on June 4, double-heading with No. 3046 - one

of three more '15Fs' in the Reefsteamers collection, and the only other operational example in South Africa - on the 'Planes, Trains & Automobiles' excursion to Magliesburg.

No. 3052 is now to move to a new home at Hermanstad, Pretoria, to help alleviate a critical motive power shortage for another main line steam operator, Friends of the Rail. With its '19D'

4-8-2 No. 2650 stopped for a major overhaul, FOTR has been reduced to using its less powerful '24' 2-8-4, forcing lower passenger loadings.

Restored to its 1991 appearance with 'whitewall' tyres and the name 'Avril', after Mr Shepherd's wife, No. 3052 has also had its original name of *Brakpan* reinstated on the smoke deflectors. This was applied when the North British-built

locomotive was new in 1945, although it also later ran with the title 'City of Germiston'.

The other locomotives in David Shepherd's collection were BR '9F' 2-10-0 No. 92203 'Black Prince' (sold to the North Norfolk Railway), '4MT' 4-6-0 No. 75029 (now on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway) and Cape Government Railways '7A' 4-8-0 No. 993 (now at the NRM in Shildon).



↑ Argentina's handsome North British-built 2-8-0 No. 121 is to be overhauled for a return to operation.

Argentinians revive 'Scottish dinosaur'

A British-built 'Great Western' locomotive is set to return to steam in South America - with a little help from British preservationists.

The Tren Patagonico (Patagonian Train), a state-owned 826km, 5ft 6in gauge railway in Argentina, is planning to overhaul North British 2-8-0 No. 121 (NBL W/No. 19778) for railtour use. It enlisted the help of the UK's North British Locomotive Preservation Group and

Glasgow University, the latter holding many of the NBL records and drawings.

Known to staff as 'the Scottish dinosaur', the locomotive was built in 1912 for the Argentine Great Western Railway (Gran Oeste Argentino). It was used for railtours during the 1990s, but was later laid up after the operator went bankrupt. It was moved to the Tren Patagonico in 2015 and has now entered the workshops.

DONOR 'KONDENSLOK' ON THE MOVE AGAIN AFTER 30 YEARS

One of only two surviving condensing tender steam locomotives left in the world has made its first moves in around 30 years - as it begins the long journey back to full working order.

South African Class 25 4-8-4 No. 3451 was shunted out of its resting place at Millsite, near Johannesburg, on June 2. Following safety checks and being made fully 'roadworthy', it will be

towed the 40 kilometres to the Germiston base of main line operator Reefsteamers later in June.

Owned by South African national operator Transnet, it has been placed in the care of preservation group Steamnet 2000 - but because sufficient funds are not available to move it there, Australian benefactor Greg McLennan has sponsored the move to

Germiston for safe storage, pending restoration.

According to its boiler plate, the locomotive's boiler certificate expired in 1977, and in the intervening years it was heavily stripped for spares to keep its sister engine No. 3511 in steam. The latter is also now in the care of Steamnet and awaiting restoration at the group's Beaconsfield site.

South African Class 25 condensing 4-8-4 No. 3451 is dragged out of the Millsite yard on June 2. SHAUN ACKERMAN

