

Friends of the Choo-Tjoe



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NEWSLETTER NUMBER 28 – APRIL 2018

EDITORIAL

There is still no firm news from Classic Rail about setting a date for work to commence on our line. It seems June is the next date when we may hear something.

Elsewhere there seems to be plenty going on and this newsletter includes notes on the Apple Express and Ceres Rail.

Also in this issue is a report of a visit to the Cyprus Railway museum. This little museum was started by the local mayor in whose village the railway station stood. It has since been placed in the care of the dept of antiquities.

Julie Jenkins

Apple Express

Among a number of projects initiated by Nelson Mandela Bay mayor, Athol Trollip, is the upgrade and extension of the Apple Express line (R3.5 million). The member for economic development, tourism and agriculture, Andrew Whitfield, said the Apple Express would begin with work on a key bridge linking the train to the harbour and nearby tourism products like the campanile and Route 67. The project, to be rolled out in partnership with Transnet, also includes an extension of the line to Gqeberha. Apple Express chief executive Nerina Skuy said this would be a win-win development, giving passengers the chance to engage with the township community and residents a chance to trade via arts and crafts and cultural programmes.

Taken from the Herald

If you want to know more about the Apple Express, visit their website at www.appleexpresstrain.co.za

Ceres Rail

Atlantic Rail have been taken over by Ceres Rail. The group have undertaken to remove the sand from the Simons Town line and thereafter maintain it in good order. Trains will once again make the journey from Cape Town using steam (using recycled water). Two possible locos for use on the line are class 24 No 3655 and 19B No 1412. The first trip is scheduled for 1st July.



24 class3566 at Voorbaai



3566



Firing up class 19B 1412



1412 at Voorbaai

In another development, Class 26 No 3450, the Red Devil, has been sent to Worcester depot where Bobby and his team have been working non stop to get the loco up and running again. The old cladding was removed (it almost fell off!) and put in the tender which was then sent to Voorbaai, one journey only.



Class 26 3450 stripped of cladding



Old cladding being removed

Photos Bobby Rudman



The gang relax after completing the pipework. The backhead looks smart.

As luck would have it, the boiler was not in too bad a shape but it did need the attention of a coded welder to cure some cracking round a couple of stays. The biggest job has been the manufacture and fitting of a myriad of pipes; the originals having been “recycled”. Every pipe had to be tailor made after having determined which pipe went where. The boiler lagging and cladding has been fitted to the boiler and as of today, it only requires the visit of the boiler inspector to hopefully pass the repairs to the firebox before the rest of the cladding goes back on.

Voorbaai.

The tender was sent to Voorbaai so that the second team could carry out repairs to the platework, there being no facilities at Worcester to do this. It travelled over behind a diesel.

But before it could make the trip, Bobby had to do some work on the tender brakes. The delayed action valve that these tenders are fitted with had to be bypassed so that the vacuum would act immediately when the diesel brakes were applied. (or if the tender broke away. You would not want that thing running away!) Basically, turning the tender into an ordinary wagon.

The tender was emptied of coal (dust and sand) and then grit blasted. While this was being

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done, the replacement sheets were being cut and welded up using the old sheets as patterns.



The spare trough



Grit blasting the tender



Fabricated parts awaiting delivery to Worcester



Cutting sheets on the guillotine



Cutting out the holes for various fittings

This was not always an easy thing to do as some of the old sheets were like pieces of broekie lace. Once they were completed, they were sent to Worcester on the daily goods.

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The tender arrives at Voorbaai



Showing alterations to vacuum system

The tender was then moved inside (a VERY tight fit) where the old trough from the mechanical stoker was removed. As luck would have it, there was a spare one on the scrap pile and this was used in the tender. Just shows; never throw anything out that might possibly have a use (even if you never use it) It should not be too long before the tender is sent back to Worcester.

Ceres Rail plan to use the loco on trips to Ashton. For a full list of upcoming trips, go to their website www.ceresrail.co.za

Colin Jenkins

Cyprus Railway Museum

On my last visit to Cyprus, I took the opportunity to visit the Cyprus Railway Museum in the village of Evrychou. It lies at the foot of the Troodos Mountains, just inside the Greek south of the island. It is in fact the only bit of the Cyprus Government Railway in the south; the rest of the line from Famagusta in the east to Morphou in the west lies in the Turkish north. It was the last station to be built (1915) and the first one to close (1933) predating the closure of the whole line in 1951. The station itself is situated quite a distance from the village and maybe that was the reason it escaped demolition, although it fell into a state of disrepair. Some years back, the local mayor decided to restore the building (very substantial for the size of the village). Whether he had in mind a railway museum or whether he had some other purpose in mind I have never found out.



The front of the station



Trackside

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Anyway, the project was taken over by the Department of Antiquities who brought it up to it's present state. A small shed has been erected to house a PWay trolley and a brake van. The latter served as a garden shed for many years until it was restored (body only) and placed at the site of Kaimalki station on the original line. However, it suffered from vandalism and it was moved to the Laiki Cultural Centre in Nicosia.



Van 152 at the Laiki Cultural Centre



Van and trolley at Evrychou



Photo gallery and models



Railway policeman with artefacts

Inside the museum, the various offices have been converted into exhibition halls dedicated to photographs, models and artefacts. A British army major (now Lt Col), Barry Turner, had been collecting items from the old railway and once the museum was a goer, he donated his collection for the benefit of all. He had been the driving force behind restoring loco No 1, the first loco on the island and the only one to survive. This was plinthed at Famagusta and was slowly rotting away. In 1972, he arranged with the antiquities dept to have it moved to the R.E.M.E workshops in the Sovereign Base Area of Dhekelia, where it was dismantled and cosmetically restored before it was returned to Famagusta. It now stands outside the old Famagusta station; now used as municipal offices. Interesting to speculate if it had got caught up in the Turkish invasion in 1974, it could have got stuck in the south and ended up in the museum. The museum has proved to be very popular, not only with foreign visitors but with the locals as well. Many of these probably did not even know Cyprus had a railway.

Colin Jenkins

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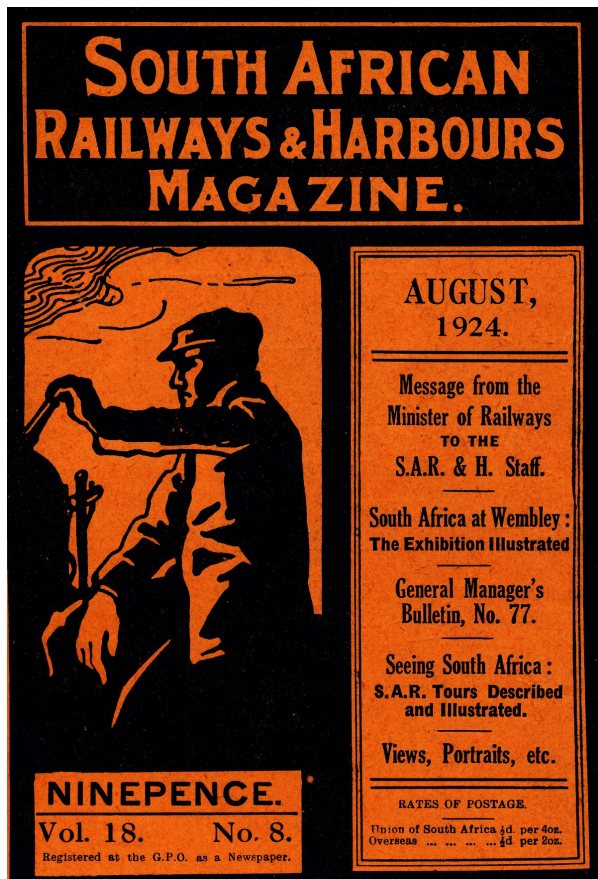
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DRISA

Digital Rail Images South Africa to give it its full title. This project has been ongoing for a number of years. The idea is to make available everything in the Transnet archives. It is being organized mainly by volunteers with assistance from several interns. A lot has been achieved but there is still more to do. To this end, the group are appealing for more funding. Your committee is considering making a donation of R10,000 from our funds and would like some feed back on whether the membership agrees.



Cover of a SAR&H magazine

774 S.A. RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS MAGAZINE. August, 1924.

SOUTH AFRICA AT WEMBLEY.

A PROUD PLACE AMONG THE DOMINIONS.

Pavilion's Comprehensiveness and Distinction.

SINGULAR SUCCESS OF DINING-CAR SERVICE.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.



The general opinion is that South Africa has a unique exhibit at the British Empire Exhibition. Compared with the Canadian and Australian Sections, the South African Pavilion is small, and the exhibits generally are not on a large scale. At first sight, too, it may appear that the South African Pavilion is somewhat out of the way, being on the confines of the Exhibition grounds. On the other hand, however, what South Africa may lack in the direction of centrality of position she gains by having sufficient accommodation for the adequate display of her exhibits. Not only is the Pavilion comparatively roomy, but there is good ground accommodation for the ostrich camp, sheep pens, and railway train and station. The latter, for instance, could scarcely have been accommodated in such a position as that occupied by either Canada or Australia. Paradoxical as it may seem, a further advantage appears to accrue to South Africa in that by reason of her position even on rush days the Pavilion is not uncomfortably crowded. One notices that on Saturdays, for instance, while visitors are crowding through some of the other Pavilions, the congestion is not great in the South African Section, and thus visitors are given a better opportunity of seeing and realising what South Africa produces and what her possibilities are than would be the case were the crowds so great as to allow of people passing through only in a mass, seeing little and understanding less.

PAVILION TYPICAL OF THE COUNTRY.

Writing to his father in the Union, a young South African law student at the London University, in a letter published in the *Cape Times*,

said:—"I commenced my round of sight-seeing, naturally beginning with South Africa, where I hoped to meet many of the friends of my school-days. In this I was disappointed, for I did not come across a single South African whom I knew, but I found so much to interest and amuse me within the South African Pavilion, and was so absorbed in the remarkably varied and comprehensive display of South African products, that I soon forgot all about my disappointment, and left the building full of praise and admiration for the great and flourishing country of which I am so proud to be a member. The impression I finally took away with me was this—that of all the exhibits in the huge area, the collection housed in the South African Pavilion was the finest and most representative, and that the little South African building, if not as gorgeous as the Indian building, in which the Taj Mahal was reproduced, or as large and elaborate as the Australian and Canadian buildings, was most typical of the country which it symbolised, and was therefore distinctive and arresting in appearance, even among all the imposing and palatial edifices which are scattered about Wembley. To quote *The Times*: 'The South African building has one feature which gives it distinction even among the many imposing buildings of the sister Dominions. Alone it reproduces the atmosphere of the country which it represents. It is built in the old Dutch style; its wide "stoep," its low tiled roof, and its sloping gables give to the building not only a characteristically South African appearance, but a delightfully restful effect as well.'"

Indeed, an expert in architecture was overheard to say that while the Pavilions of other Dominions were larger and in many ways more generously equipped, it was his opinion that from an architectural standpoint the South African Pavilion, in so far as it was true to type, was the most characteristic building in the Exhibition grounds.

FASCINATING FEATURES.

There is one feature of the South African exhibit which has been singled out by the British Press as being the best of its kind at Wembley, and that is the display of South Africa's fauna. The grouping of the animals is unusually well

An article from the magazine

The group are also asking interested persons to approach their employers with a view to making corporate donations.

For a fuller appreciation of the group's work and organization, visit www.drisa.co.za

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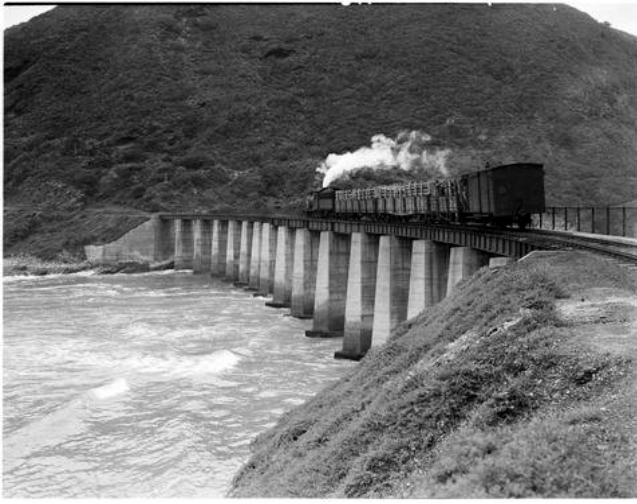
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A selection of photographs from the collection

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Minutes of the 7th Annual General Meeting of the *Friends of the Choo-Tjoe* held at the
Knysna Library Hall, Memorial Square, Knysna on 19 March 2018 at 15:15

- 1 Welcome:
Colin Jenkins, chairman of the *Friends of the Choo-Tjoe*, welcomed all to the Annual General Meeting.
- 2 Notice of the Meeting:
The notice of the meeting and the agenda were read by the secretary.
- 3 Attendance:
As per the attached attendance register, 9 attendees signed the register.
Apologies:
6 apologies were received, namely: Andrew Stevens, Dave Jones, Sandy Buchanan, Terry Cockroft, Julie Jenkins and Dirk van der Zeyden.
Proxies Received:
Nil.
- There being a quorum present, the meeting proceeded.
- 4 Minutes of the 6th AGM:
The minutes were taken as read. Proposed: Rita Wiid. Seconded: Mike Reddy.
- 5 Matters Arising:
There were no matters arising.
- 6 Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements for 2015:
Allan Waterston highlighted the main points in his report. A copy of the Allan's report is attached as **Addendum 1**. The report was accepted to acclaim by all.
- 7 Chairman's Report:
Colin Jenkins read his report. A copy of the report as attached as **Addendum 2**.
- 8 Election of a management committee for 2014:
The Chairman announced that no nominations had been received for the 2018/19 committee - and after inviting nominations from the floor (there being none) – it was proposed that the 2017 committee be elected to the 2018/19 management committee. The new committee will therefore consist of the following members: Colin Jenkins, Julie Jenkins, Allan Waterston, Dirk van der Zeyden and Kees Estié. A Chairman will be elected at the first committee meeting.
- 9 Other Business:
9.1 On a question, Colin said reading between the lines and owing to a positive change in government recently, he was optimistic that tourism and in support of this, heritage rail will receive greater acknowledgement than in the past. Reports suggest that Transnet is now fully behind heritage rail with one of the senior managers very enthusiastic about Heritage Rail.
9.2 It was mentioned that it seems that Transnet have opened many of their routes to heritage rail operators. Ceres Rail has become a major operator in recent years - the benefit to them though is that their line operates mainly freight (fresh fruit in season) trains during the week and over weekends it caters for tourism traffic.
9.3 Colin supported the view that the Knysna to Sedgefield section of the railway line was not in such a poor condition that major works would be necessary to make it operational. The *Friends* had supported Classic Rail's application to Transnet for a lease to refurbish the line and manage operations though very little had been communicated on progress with their application. Two locomotives have reportedly been reserved for use on the line (one 19D and another at Voorbaai) – though conversion to oil firing in order to minimise the fire risk.
9.4 Regarding the involvement of municipalities (especially George and Knysna) in supporting the re-opening of the line, Colin said that Transnet did invite municipalities to be part of the initiative, but this had fizzled out, seemingly as municipalities did not have money to support projects such as these. However, George and Knysna municipalities would in all likelihood support the waste-by-rail initiative depending on their current contracts with carting companies.
9.5 Fraser Howell, who had arrived late, requested that an additional paragraph be added to the minutes of the previous AGM (as a correction to the minutes), to reflect a question he had asked which was not documented in the minutes, - Had any monies been reimbursed which were paid by members for the refurbishment of the trolley? To which Alan had replied 'No' -.

10 Closure:

In closing, Colin thanked members for their attendance and support. The meeting ended at 16:05.

Chairman:

Date:

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Addendum 1: Treasurer Allan Waterston's Report for the 2018 AGM

I have pleasure in presenting the financial position of the Friends of the Choo-Tjoe for the year ended 31 December 2017. This financial report has been prepared on a cash basis.

As was the case in 2016, 2017 saw very little in the way of cash movement either in respect of receipts or expenditure. The table below reflects the cash transactions that took place during the year under review

	2017	2016	2015
Income			
General donations	3 400.00	3 750.00	3 050.00
Membership fees	2 630.00	3 490.00	3 867.87
Disposal of Wickham Trolley	0	0	31 500.00
Sundry income	0	140.00	120.00
Interest	13.91	512.21	1 187.31
	6 043.91	7 892.21	39 725.18

Expenditure			
Bank charges	821.10	542.55	1 118.17
Website hosting	565.00	526.00	565.00
Fedrail membership	0	600.00	0
Postage/Stationery/Sundry expenses	2 268.00	1 090.05	1 440.00
	3 626.10	2 758.60	3 123.17

During 2016 an investment account was opened to maximise interest on surplus cash held by the Friends. The balance on this account at the end of the year was R111 658.98 (R104 871.63). Interest earned on the transaction account amounted to R13.91. Bank charges arising in respect of cash and cheque deposits to our account remain high, eft transactions don't attract charges. Postage and stationery expenses, which include the cost of printer cartridges, were up on the previous year.

A surplus of **R2 417.81** (2016 - R5 133.61) was reflected for the year under review.

At year end cash and bank totalled **R139 823.84** (2016 - R131 352.68).

The financial position of the Friends is healthy

In terms of the agreement concluded between the funders of the Wickham Trolley dealing with monies advanced for the purchase of the trolley, the amounts advanced (R 13 680) treated as donations, would not be refundable unless the Friends ceased to exist after a period of five years from 1 January 2011. Given the time that elapsed there is no longer any liability on the Friends as regards repayment of these monies. In addition, various expenses (R24 853) incurred in the refurbishment of the Trolley, were funded by specific members who have not yet requested reimbursement. A record of these expenses and the funders is maintained, details of which are available on request. Other than the former there were no outstanding commitments at year end.

Regrettably a number of items namely, picture frame, vinyl print of Goukamma Station, a shunters lamp, 2 corner basins, and a points lock and chain were lost in the fires of 7 June 2017. A full list of the remaining items (assets) held by the Friends is available on request.

Allan Waterston

Treasurer

19 January 2018

Chairman's report

This year has proved to be one of ups and downs. For most of the year there was complete silence from Classic Rail.

Then came the announcement from Transnet that it was looking at reinstating not only the George Knysna line, but several others as well. On closer inspection, this letter did not say anything new. The only bit of interest to us was the announcement that our line was the subject of a concession; to whom it did not say, but it was pretty obvious.

Although there was no official announcement, these things have a habit of getting out and it appeared that the 1st March would see work commence.

Indeed one locomotive had been earmarked for the line with another in the pipeline and work was due to start this month. This has not happened and it is concerning that the team at Voorbaai may disintegrate. They still have to live.

Those of you who live locally will know all about the model steam loco/trolley that ran over the causeway and which caused much heated debate on social media.

This provoked a response from Classic Rail who asked us for a meeting. Having been assured it was nothing to do with us, they told us that things were still on track but still awaiting a couple of signatures.

When all the hooaha broke out on facebook, we suggested that a statement should be put out to counter some of the negative comment and wild speculation. Whether our suggestion was the catalyst, or whether they would have put out a statement anyway, Classic Rail did indeed release an update.

But it is still the case that no starting date has been announced and one wonders whether the upheaval in Government has set it back.

In other parts of the country, tourist trains have done rather better. Transnet have relaid the line to Cullinan so Friends of the Rail can now run their trains right through to that town.

Closer to home, the Apple Express has enjoyed a very successful holiday season. This was a joint effort spearheaded by Nelson Mandela Bay municipality along with Transnet and the Apple Express group. I paid a visit one Saturday and the trains were packed out. It was impossible to get a seat. That season has now ended and discussions are taking place to refine the operation.

Ceres Rail are running trains from Cape Town to Ceres and occasionally run to other exotic locations, usually with an overnight stay. These trains are also hugely popular. All of which goes to show that the appetite for rail travel is out there. All we need is a railway.

As you know, we have not charged a subscription for existing members this year. It was felt by your committee that members were not getting the information they deserved. Hopefully, we will be back to normal next year.

May I thank you for your support and hope that by the next AGM, we have something to celebrate.



Tailpiece

Spotted at Worcester. No 2756, a GD-23-C built SAR Pretoria in November 1950. No 7931 was built as Central South African Railway 20352 but probably never carried the number. Built Pretoria December 1910 as C-13 521 and later became an E-17. Renumbered 7931 in February 1953 as staff van.

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