

WHEELTAPPER

NEWSLETTER OF THE

WESTERN PROVINCE LIVE STEAMERS

President	Arthur Zuhlsdorff	Date	June 2012
Vice President	Bernard Ridley		
Chairman	Ian Dorrat	WPLS	P.O Box 15810
Vice Chairman	Bobby Moore		Panorama
Secretary	Wouter Bergakker		7506
Treasurer	Mervyn Knickelbein		
Committee	Basil Lotter	Web Site	www.wpls.co.za
	Bernard Taylor		
	Mark Schmitt	Track	Bertie Genade St.
	Michael Barnes		off Frans Conradie
Editor	Justin Shaw		Parow
Public Running	First Saturday of Every Month	Club Day	16th June 2012

March Newsletter

I have to start off this newsletter by giving my sincere apologies to everyone who did not receive the March newsletter in the post, this was entirely my fault and I am willing to stand trial while everyone throws ballast at me. I have included the "Around the club" article published in March.

Around the club (Published March 2012)

It has been a great start to the year with running days and work days being well supported! Ash pits in the station are almost completed meaning that there will be a place for you to clean your fire even if there is another locomotive ahead of you, please make use of the ash pits and save our station sleepers. Speaking of fire, we had quite a large fire on February's running day that started under the bridge and worked its way along the cutting, members were just getting things under control when the fire department (on their way to another call out) saw the smoke and came to investigate, their help extinguishing the fire was welcomed as tired breathless members stepped back and watched how the pros do it, a big thank you to everyone who helped!

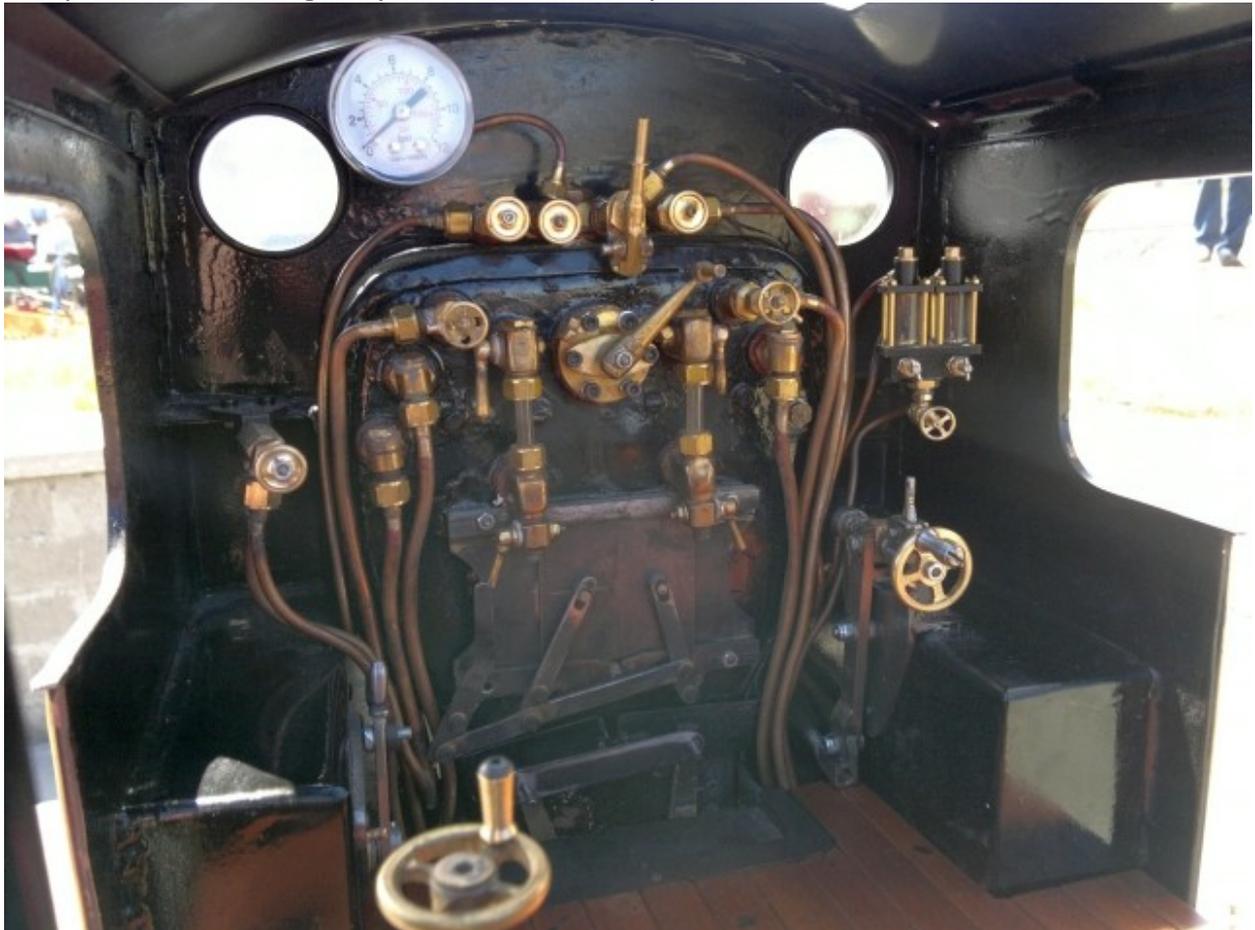
Around the middle of February, some vandals decided to lift up some track, luckily not much damaged was caused although it did take two working days for a small team to fix the mess.

There has been some activity around signal cabin and points leaving the station, can't report much more but it seems progress is being made towards automated points.

A warm welcome to the Hunn family (Neil & Melissa and their two daughters Charné & Audrey) as well as the Lock family (Gavin & Suki and their son Dylan & daughter Anya) whom joined the club at the beginning of this year.

A congratulations is in order to Percy Le Roux who has completed his J Tank featured in September 2011 WheelTapper, as with most freshly build locomotives, there are a few teething problems but it has already completed a few laps around the track!

This picture of the cab gives you an idea of the superb finish!



Percy Le Roux's J Tank

Around the club (June 2012)

April's running day was cold and rainy, even so, a few trains ran and fun was had by all who attended. May & June's running days were sunny and well supported by the public. All the fire pits are now finished and the hand railing on new steps of the pedestrian bridge is nearing completion. I neglected the spraying of the track for a few weeks and after the first winter rains, a small jungle had arose covering most of the track, this is now under control thanks to trainee drivers who have been puling me around the track with the sprayer.

A small meeting was held on the 31st May to discuss future projects regarding the track. A few conclusions were made:

1. It was decided that it is not feasible to run a line under the current bridge due to drainage problems and height restrictions.
2. A vote was held and it was agreed that a tunnel was next major project to be undertaken.
3. A sub team was created to investigate different tunnel designs and the costs involved. Their proposal once complete will be presented to a general meeting for approval.

Welcome to our newest member Bodene Gundry who is studying at Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Congratulations to Bernard Taylor who has gotten his new LNER Class V2 class locomotive up and running after a few teething problems. This is one of the slickest looking locomotives I have ever seen with its V shaped cab. The three cylinders produce a great sound and a lot of power!



Club Calendar 2012

One of the suggestions I received was to create a club calendar; this will enable members to see what is happening and plan for work days or events they would like to attend.

We will update this with work days and the major project that has been planned for that day (general work day jobs will continue as normal).

Sat Jun 16	9:00am – 6:00pm	Club Play Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Jul 7	9:00am – 5:00pm	Public Running Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Jul 14	2:00pm – 3:00pm	General Meeting - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Aug 4	9:00am – 5:00pm	Public Running Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Sep 1	9:00am – 5:00pm	Public Running Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Sep 15	9:00am – 6:00pm	Club Play Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Oct 6	9:00am – 5:00pm	Public Running Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Nov 3	9:00am – 5:00pm	Public Running Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Dec 1	9:00am – 5:00pm	Public Running Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow
Sat Dec 15	9:00am – 6:00pm	Xmas Party /Play Day - Bertie Genade Street (off Frans Conradie Drive) Parow

News Letter Articles

Trying to follow in the footsteps of the previous editors of the WheelTapper has turned out to be a bit more challenging than I expected! I would like to keep the newsletter interesting and have a few technical articles to keep the brain ticking over. Please pass on any interesting articles you may find to me for the newsletter. I am also open to suggestions and criticism. Feedback and articles from the members would be much appreciated.

Justin Shaw

National Miniature Locomotive Meet

When we talk nationals everyone, including myself become excited for one reason or another. I think after this recent meet, it being my first steam meet away from home, I now know why one get goose bumps. I never even thought I would go! First of all I thought there will be so many people with more knowledge than me. Second I did not have a proper running locomotive until very recently. Oh yes, and then there was the question of how much will it cost and that is one of the things that really got to me after I saw my way able to go. See, here is the reason. I managed to purchase a lovely Locomotive off a very dear friend after he finished his J-Tank. The J-Tank is, in itself, a masterpiece by my standards. So

I had the loco and the company I work for was kind enough to grant me leave over this period and let me use the company vehicle with fuel and toll fees included. I can only thank them for this opportunity. Now the problem was who you ask to come with you to make use spare seats. I did not know at first but soon found myself with a lot of choices. I was going to take my Jerry-M, with Percy and his new J-Tank, as the next one on the list. Justin and I had become great friends and as the editor of WheelTapper, making him a good choice. Hence the trio was formed. We started to plan and soon got to the point where weight was becoming the next factor so we decided not to invite the rest of the now 20 odd people we would have liked to taken!

The big day arrived, the trip started, and we left in the early hours after last minute preparations removing the canopy and cutting away some of the box Percy made to protect his loco. With Trailer, tent, three locomotives with their driving coaches, and all the tools we might need we started out slowly but cheerfully and it seemed we were young again! We stopped outside Touwsriver under the stars and did what men would do. The only time we did not talk was whilst we were on those long climbs that seems to last forever and we were listening (on CD) to the sounds of a locomotive pulling out the station and building up speed. No one said anything, but in the silence we knew that we were all living a dream as we stood on the footplate of that Locomotive into the night.

So it took us a long time to get there with all the road works and trucks keeping our slow train back but when we arrived it found us putting up camp or rather trying to put up the tent even before we had adjusted to the altitude and with a well-deserved Whiskey. I still do not know if we all worked together or not but the following morning we had the best view of the track and station ; Oh man was it a sight! We took it easy and found that running at night was the best fun as steam was in abundance and the track was not that busy. During the day we wandered around and made a lot of friends. There was such a lot to learn and see and I got lost in the books for sale.

Before this becomes boring let me start by thanking those at WPLS who phoned during the weekend to wish us well. I just want to thank all our club members for finding out how it was and understanding that we could all 20 members. I learned that when trains, steam or whatever gets in your blood there will always be friends no matter where you go. Again I would like to thank Centurion for having us. I also think that if you like to go steam meets you do not really need to take a locomotive, as our chairman and Geoffry de Vartek did, who flew up and enjoyed themselves as much as we did. In the end it is about sharing with friends. Even the WPLS bunch shared some magic moments while waiting for a thunderstorm to pass and Percy told us some amusing stories. All in all it was truly worth it to go, but even better to come back home and enjoy what our club had to offer. We can be proud of that and I think all clubs big or small should be proud of what they are. If I might suggest something, maybe we should all work together to go to the next meet by train!!!

Roberto Bezuidenhout