



WHEELTAPPER

NEWSLETTER OF THE

WESTERN PROVINCE LIVE STEAMERS

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|---|
| President | Arthur Zuhlsdorff | Date | Mar 2014 |
| Vice President | Bernard Ridley | | |
| Chairman | Ian Dorrat | Postal | WPLS |
| Vice Chairman | Bobby Moore | | P.O Box 15810 |
| Secretary | Ivan Stewart | | Panorama |
| Treasurer | Mervyn Knickelbein | | 7506 |
| Committee | Basil Lotter | Track | Bertie Genade St. |
| | Bernard Taylor | | off Frans Conradie |
| | Jeandre Briedenhann | | Parow |
| | Neil Hunn | | |
| Editor | Justin Shaw | Web Site | www.wpls.co.za |
| Public Running | First Saturday of Every Month | Play Day | 15th Mar 2014 |

Around the club

I am very pleased to report that things are looking really good at the club, even though working days have been reasonably quiet. The workshop has been given a proper cleaning and rearranging, repair work has been done on a few pieces of track that needed attention, the club grounds are looking amazing (more on this later) and the vandalism / stealing has decreased. Running days have been very busy and I would like to encourage members to come down to the track and get involved in the fun.

Security Update

We have seen about one alarm activation every two weeks and have noticed a decrease in incidents at the premises. Plans to install the outstanding outdoor eyes have been put in place which will increase the effectiveness of the detections and hopefully further deter thieves and vandals.



Chubb asking some vagrants to move away from our fence.

Club Grounds

While at work in early December I received a call from Chubb informing me that the alarm had been triggered and that they had sent out armed response. A few minutes later another call from Chubb "Someone has been found on the premises and claims to be from your garden service", knowing that we do not have a garden service I asked them to keep the person, excited at the thought that we might have caught a thief, I jumped in my car and drove to the club at the speed limit! Upon arriving at the club there was a Chubb car and a small truck and trailer parked at the entrance, to my amazement 15 guys with weed eaters were happily hacking away at the grounds long grass. Confused about the situation at hand, I called the Chairman & Vice President who knew nothing of the situation and after having a chat with the "Guy in charge", I started to suspect some sort of scam. I phoned the owner of the company and was informed that the council had commissioned him to attend to cutting all the grass in the area including our grounds and was reassured that this would be done at no cost to the club! Since then they have been back monthly to attend to grass cutting on our premises. We are all very grateful for this new service as it has freed up a lot of time on working days which can now be used to attend to more fun and interesting jobs.



On the web

Do you have 3.5 million dollars lying around? - <http://goo.gl/AFAsPp>

7 ¼" Hunslet



Congratulations to Reg Lees on completing his Hunslet!

Play Day

I would like to invite members to join us on the play days. It is a very relaxed and fun filled day and a great time to take your locomotive for a casual drive. Also feel free to bring down other projects for members to admire and discuss.



Some of the drivers and their locomotives from the last play day.

This is all you need to know to become an engineer

The U.S. standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number.

Why was that gauge used?

Because that's the way they built them in England, and English expatriates designed the U.S. railroads.

Why did the English build them like that?

Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did 'they' use that gauge then?

Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they had used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Why did the wagons have that particular Odd wheel spacing?

Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So, who built those old rutted roads?

Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (including England) for their legions. Those roads have been used ever since.

And the ruts in the roads?

Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels.

Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. Therefore, the United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot. In other words, bureaucracies live forever.

So the next time you are handed a specification, procedure, or process, and wonder, 'What horse's ass came up with this?', you may be exactly right.

Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the rear ends of two war horses.

Now, the twist to the story:

When you see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, you will notice that there are two big booster rockets

attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah.



The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit larger, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains, and the SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, as you now know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's ass. And you thought being a horse's ass wasn't important!



Now you know, Horses' Asses control almost everything.....Explains a whole lot of stuff, doesn't it?

Club calendar 2014

| Date | Time | Event |
|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Sat Mar 15 | 9:00 – 17:00 | Play Day |
| Sat Apr 5 | 9:00 – 17:00 | Public Running Day |
| Sat May 3 | 9:00 – 17:00 | Public Running Day |
| Sat May 17 | 9:00 – 17:00 | Play Day |
| Sat Jun 7 | 9:00 – 17:00 | Public Running Day |