



# *Stars of Sandstone*

30<sup>TH</sup> MARCH - 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2017

## **SANDSTONE HERITAGE TRUST**

In 2005 the Sandstone Heritage Trust was formed to conserve, preserve, and restore Heritage assets. Based on the Sandstone Estates farm in the Eastern Free State of South Africa, the Trust has the largest private collection of 2-ft Narrow Gauge locomotives and rolling stock in the world with 22 operational steam locomotives and over 25-kms of running line. This collection is not limited to the Narrow Gauge railway but also comprises a large collection of working vintage agricultural machinery, earth moving plant, classic motor vehicles, and of course our superb collection of South African manufactured and World War II military vehicles. This collection has been built-up over the years in cooperation with the SA Armour Museum in Bloemfontein.

## **STARS OF SANDSTONE 2017**

This will be the fourth event held under the Stars of Sandstone banner at Sandstone Estates, near Ficksburg in the Eastern Free State, South Africa. The 2017 event will be bigger, broader, and more captivating than any preceding events. Although previously an annual event, the increased interest by both local and international visitors has highlighted the need for major infrastructure improvements and a longer timescale for planning, and due to this there will not be an event in 2016. We hope that this will also allow more time for our regular supporters and newcomers to plan their visit to Stars 2017. The event will run from 30th March to 7th April 2017 with additional Public Open Days on 8th and 9th April 2017 where a daily entry ticket price enables the festival to be enjoyed by local communities.

Stars of Sandstone is an interactive heritage festival, where visitors are encouraged to get involved with the working exhibits, from driving a tractor to being a passenger in a Sherman Tank, and of course enjoying the frequent railway trips around the farm. Train rides are available throughout each day of the festival, with different locos featuring every day. The highlight of the railway experience in 2017 will be the launch of the oldest Garratt type in South Africa and the second oldest Garratt in the world, Class NGG11, No. 52.

The event offers on-site catering for guests for with breakfast, lunch and dinner included. Camping is available on site, and there are a large number of excellent guest houses in the surrounding area.



Picture by Rod Hering



Picture by Paul Stratford

Sandstone Heritage Trust's motto is "Preserving the best of our past for the future", and at Stars of Sandstone 2017 visitors will be able to immerse themselves in a world that steps away from the pressures of modern life. Both adults and children will be able to experience sights and sounds that their parents and grandparents found commonplace, while surrounded by the majestic scenery of the Eastern Free State. All of these elements are combined to present a heritage festival unparalleled in Africa, and possibly even the world.

We are looking at packaging additional options as well which could include steam at Victoria Falls, steam in the Western Cape, the Cape Winelands and an agricultural event in the Western Cape.

Rail tourism has been sadly lacking in South Africa in recent times and we are actively pursuing the opportunity to run a steam hauled train from Johannesburg to Sandstone during the event. This would require electric haulage to Bloemfontein but then steam haulage. The train will provide full on board accommodation and also multiple photo opportunities on the Bloemfontein to Bethlehem line while at the event. A separate steam hauled freight will also be introduced on the line for more photo experiences. David Shepherd's Class 15F locomotive, No: 3052 together with Sandstone's Class GMAM No: 4079 and Class 19D No: 2654 are expected to be featured on this tour.

## WHAT CAN YOU SEE AND DO AT STARS 2017?

Steam train rides

Heavy armour military displays

Classic vehicle rides

Military vehicle rides

Vintage bus rides

Vintage earthmoving displays

Traction engine displays

Flips in vintage aircraft

Tractor rides

Ox wagon rides

Vintage agricultural machinery

Special photographic sessions with the exhibits

Sandstone reserves the right to change the advertised programme without notice.

**Full details can be found on the Sandstone website, [www.sandstone-estates.com](http://www.sandstone-estates.com) and on our Facebook page.**

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