



INTRODUCING

Sandstone Estates

Sandstone Estates (Pty) Ltd was formed with the initial R910 000 purchase of farms near Ficksburg in the Eastern Free State in 1995. The farms totalled 407.153 hectares of farmland which had been owned by the Wille Family since the 1830s. Substantial investments have subsequently been made to acquire surrounding farms, and has seen the total farming area expanded to 7300 hectares, currently valued at R87.6m. Further expansion opportunities are constantly being sought.

The original set of farms contained a large number of vintage agricultural items such as tractors and agricultural machinery resulting in the formation of the Heritage Division — Sandstone Heritage Trust — to conserve, preserve and restore these Heritage assets. This then presented a tourism business opportunity.

Now, 20 years later, with its own private 2ft Narrow Gauge Railway system, Sandstone Estates has become a unique Heritage destination, recognised both locally and internationally as being one of the best in the world.

Sandstone Estates (Pty) Ltd is a multi-faceted business, as illustrated below.



THE OPERATIONAL HUB AT SANDSTONE ESTATES: THE MAIN COMPLEX



- 1 Entrance Road
 - 2 Parking
 - 3 Ticket Office
 - 4 The Waenhuis Café
 - 5 Military Vehicles
 - 6 Tractor Display
 - 7 Ox Wagon Shed
 - 8 Steam & Vintage Sheds
 - 9 Vintage Machinery
 - 10 Vintage Workshop
 - 11 Main Workshop
 - 12 Stationary Engine Museum
 - 13 Rolling Stock Shed
 - 14 Sherman Tank Shed
 - A Farm Stores
 - B Admin Office
 - C Bean Plant
 - D Storage Grain Silos
 - E Seed Store
 - F Weighbridge & Office
 - G Machinery Stores
 - H Million Litre Reservoir
- Other key amenities:**
- 16 Camping Grounds
 - 17 Ablution Block
 - 18 Steam Trains depart from **Hoekfontein Station**
 - 19 Ox Wagon Rides
 - 20 Military Vehicle Rides

Located centrally on the original farm *Hoekfontein*, the Main Complex at Sandstone Estates incorporates the infrastructure required to run this commercial enterprise, and has been developed to include the tourism aspect.

Located on the R26 between Fouriesburg and Ficksburg in the Eastern Free State, Sandstone Estates lies in the foothills of the Majestic Maluti Mountains.

The Sandstone staff complement is just 64 people, from Directors down to animal handlers. Specialists are employed contractually for ad hoc tasks. Casual labourers are hired as and when needed.

The total area is 7300 hectares, of which 3700 hectares are for crops. Sandstone follows rotational crop practices and fallows land to allow soils to regenerate. Land is set aside for infrastructure, animal grazing and tourism.

The 30km-long 2ft Narrow Gauge Railway line is in use on the Estate for tourism and moving grain.

55 kilometres of roadways allow access to the lands. A certified weighbridge is also in place on the farm to control incoming and outgoing loads.

The Railway, the camping grounds and ablutions, as well as The Waenhuis Café and the layout of the storage/display buildings are central to sharing the Heritage of our country with the public. Sandstone hosts regular public and corporate events, as well as a 10-day festival bi-annually.

Sandstone has storage capacity in its SAFEX certified silos to store 13,000 ton of various grains. These are complemented by a bean plant and drying facilities with eight small dryers, sorting tables and a packaging plant.

Additional storage facilities include 6 stores for agricultural goods, 10 open storage areas and covered facilities for heritage items.



Spring, Summer, Autumn or Winter, the Sandstone country light is the best in the world. Photographers delight in all the visual material available.

FARMING DIVISION: CROPS & FIELDS

As Sandstone's core business, farming is conducted using recognised best farming practice and proven scientific methods, as well as following good corporate governance and adhering to statutory requirements.

It is an agricultural enterprise that is highly mechanised and automated on a large scale. While small scale farming still takes place, we see large scale mechanised and automated farming as the future, to ensure economic viability and the only way to produce food for a growing world population.

Sandstone grows the following crops: Soya, Sunflowers, Sugar Beans, White and Yellow Maize and Wheat on a large scale, and Cosmos to a lesser degree.

Sandstone is fortunate to be close to the Maluti Mountains with average rainfall of 800mm per annum. The recent drought in South Africa has been a serious threat to the farming countrywide, with the rainfall at Sandstone only being 380mm in 2015/2016. Despite this, together with our very deep soils of up to 1.2m, yields have been excellent.

Farming is an all year round, constant cycle of activity. Sandstone also assists neighbouring farmers with harvesting, and maintains a strong relationships with them.

We also maintain strong relationships with associated agricultural and machinery businesses and support organisations. We are members of Free State Agriculture and Grain SA and have a cooperative working agreement with AFGRI. To further organic development, we have a cooperative agreement with Lower Pertwood Organic Farm in South West England, an acknowledged leader in their field.



With science being an essential component of our modern farming enterprise, we make extensive studies of weather patterns via Accuweather, the South African Weather Service and US-based NOAA. This gave us advance warning of the El Nino system in 2015/2016 which led us to cut back planting to only 500ha. While this may be bad news commercially, the up side in that it enables us to fallow large areas of land for regeneration, with the result that yields are higher with returning normal rainfall patterns. We also select cultivars to suit climatic conditions and environments and conduct trials on behalf of seed producers with new cultivars.

We consult with the Department of Agriculture on diseases and invasive plants and, with 16 dams and water courses on the farm, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry on water conservation and invasive plants and trees. We also make use of universities from time to time. Besides physical inspections, we also use drones to monitor our crops due to the large area that we need to cover.

To support scientific agriculture, it is essential to deal with experts in the field. We partner with Pro Gro which provides soil analysis to determine fertility and micro elements, lime levels to balance the PH of our soils, and fertiliser requirements. Pioneer and Panner supply our seeds and ProFert our fertilisers.

Novon Protecta/Syngenta provide our chemicals for weed and pest control, although we do try to take an organic stance as much as possible. Sandstone strives to farm in harmony with nature and to protect biodiversity as far as possible.

Representing income capacity of >R20m per annum

In 2016, 3700 hectares of land were planted as follows:
 1700ha Yellow and White Maize
 500ha Soya Beans
 530ha Sunflowers
 Wheat 560ha Wheat
 And 410ha of Green Feed and grasses for cattle and seed

2016-7 Season



Maize
White & Yellow
 1700 ha planted
 Yield 8 - 10 tons/ha



Soya Beans
 500 ha planted
 Yield 2 - 2.5 tons/ha



Sunflowers
 530 ha planted
 Yield 2.5 - 3 tons/ha



Wheat
 560 ha planted
 Yield 2 - 2.5 tons/ha



Sugar Beans
on crop rotation



Cosmos tricolour
hybrid for local & export markets

Agricultural Machinery in use:

- 15 x modern tractors
- 6 x Combine Harvesters
- 5 x Planters
- 6 x 12-ton
- 2 x 30-ton grain trailers
- 3 x trucks
- 2 x 30-ton lowbed trailers
- 1 x 30-ton tri-axle trailer
- 2 x 30-ton grain trailers
- 2 x TLBs



Various Cultivators, Offsets, Rippers, Balers, Slashers, Rakes, Chaser Bins, Manure and Fertiliser Spreaders and many more



FARMING DIVISION: LIVESTOCK

The Sandstone herd numbers 700 head of cattle — all high quality breeding stock: Bonsmara, Beefmaster and Afrikaner, which are in very good condition, despite the drought. Currently, the herd is valued at R5m.

The breeding herd generates income from the sale of calves, heifers and older animals. These cattle are bred for meat, with high quality bulls introduced for breeding. We have also set up a joint cooperative farming agreement with a local farmer on our lands. Other companies also farm on our behalf on a profit split basis.

Pedigreed Afrikaner Oxen have been bred, trained and actually earn their keep by pulling wagons and ploughing the land during events.

Having systematically eradicated all trace of disease on the farm, our staff also benefit by having the opportunity to have their own livestock graze, breed and be managed on the Estate, along with our own herd.



THE HERITAGE DIVISION

While the main objective behind our Heritage Division is capital appreciation, we are aiming for an increase in derivative tourism activities and to seeing the division becoming self-sustaining. A secondary view is that we also strive to leave behind a legacy of South African Heritage for future generations.

There is truly nowhere else on earth quite like this — a large agricultural estate with its own private railway line and the largest collection of 2-ft Narrow Gauge steam locomotives in the world. There are more than 50 restored and unrestored locomotives, of which more than 30 are fully operational.

At Sandstone one can find a magnificent cross-section of almost 300 items of agricultural equipment dating back to the late 1800s. Included are steam traction engines and the earliest of early vintage tractors, ranging from the huge Emerson Brantingham Big 4-30, right down to the diminutive Massey Harris Pony.

There is a collection of nearly 500 farm implements, a huge collection of old combine harvesters and threshing machines and, to top it off, a fleet of vintage earth moving machinery that we use constantly to improve Sandstone's infrastructure.

A Stationary Engine Museum has recently been completed which showcases man's ingenuity in pumping water and generating electricity for well over 100 years.

We have accumulated an extensive library and archive of heritage information that documents and encompasses most of the areas of the collection. It will be a priceless treasure in the future.

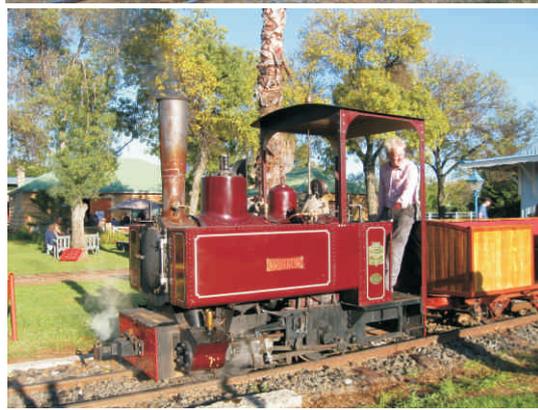


The Heritage Collection encompasses:

- Agricultural Machinery
- Stationery Engines
- The Sandstone Railway
- Rolling Stock
- Military Vehicles
- Classic Vehicles

Accessible to people from all over the world through the extensive efforts of Sandstone Tourism.

The Trust is funded from farm income and private donations. In everything we do, we subscribe to our motto, *"Preserving the best of our past for the future"*



HERITAGE — The Sandstone Railway

In 1996, the Midmar Museum in Kwa Zulu Natal was operating a 2ft Narrow Gauge Railway in conjunction with the Natal Parks Board and Transnet Heritage Foundation (THF). The Parks Board decided that the railway was not part of their core business. Through THF, a number of locomotives, coaches, wagons 4000 tons of rail material found safe haven at Sandstone Heritage Trust.

And so the Sandstone Railway was born. Today, it is close to 30 kilometres long, with more than 30 working locomotives and over a 100 items of other rolling stock. Planned for completion by early 2017, is a separate Children's Railway for education and enjoyment.

Extensive workshops on the farm as well as in Bloemfontein restore & maintain steam locomotives and rolling stock to create a pool of items that can be made available to railway preservation groups and operators in South Africa. Sandstone has also exported restored engines to other continents.

In line with current legislation, the Sandstone Railway is fully compliant with the Railway Safety Regulator (RSR) requirements of South Africa. Aside from an extensive technical and archival library, we store a vast amount of documentation required by RSR legislation in terms of Safety Management Systems and Safety Critical Staff requirements. This also extends to all reporting procedures required by the RSR, and such documents are also carried and filed in the library.

Sandstone Heritage Trust is a founder member of the Federation of Heritage Railways of Southern Africa (FEDRAIL SA) and a member of WATTRAIN, The World Association of Tourist Trams and Trains and an associate of the European Federation of Museum & Tourist Railways (FEDECRAIL). We maintain an excellent cooperative relationship with the South African national rail authority, Transnet.

HERITAGE — MILITARY VEHICLES

A significant collection of historic military vehicles has been assembled. This was done via a Public Private Partnership with the South African Armour Museum which is part of the South African Army Armour Formation, based in Tempe Military Base in Bloemfontein. The emphasis is on South African manufactured vehicles that had seen action in our Military history, but now a number of WW2 vehicles have been acquired that were used in campaigns involving South Africa and some significant foreign machinery from local campaigns.

The partnership was launched at an event on the farm in 2002, Sandstone held the great 100 and the The Great 400 Working, which saw a Guinness World Record for the greatest number of tractors working in a field at one time. The SA Armour Museum fired the starting flare and demonstrated a number of vehicles. Today there are over 40 vehicles in the collection, some owned by Sandstone Heritage Trust and some on loan from the SA Armour Museum.

As a further example of this cooperation, the SANDF maintains a small base on the farm for training purposes and for patrolling parts of the Lesotho border.



HERITAGE — CLASSIC VEHICLES

As the collection diversified over the years, many classic vehicles ranging from trucks and buses to cars to earthmoving equipment were acquired. Earthmoving equipment comprises a number of vintage trucks, Caterpillar scrapers, graders and bulldozers which are regularly used on Sandstone infrastructure, avoiding the outlay for the hire or purchase of costly modern equipment.

We also have a large collection of road steam vehicles that have been restored and are maintained by our locomotive workshop.

The car collection ranges from a 1915 Model T Ford pickup, through 1930s Model A Fords to pre-war British machines from Morris and MG.



TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL & COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Sandstone has an ongoing training facility for the farming enterprise, as well as in the Heritage Workshops.

Amazingly, we have attracted a number of younger people who want to learn to maintain or operate our steam locomotives. Our modern workshop staff have also been trained in keeping our vintage vehicles and agricultural machinery in operation.

We often host experienced railwaymen and other artisans from overseas, who pass their skills to staff and visitors alike. Visiting South African artisans also share their knowledge freely.

University students have also been known to work the farm and the workshops as practical training or with which to furnish their theses.

Staff enjoy the benefits of housing, an on-site school for their children, sports facilities and the opportunity to grow their herds and wealth as previously mentioned.

Free Staters are very hospitable, neighbourly people, and Sandstone often assists local farmers and neighbouring towns with labour, water, feed and skills. We have the only Vermeer Maize Baler in the Free State and share its capabilities regularly.

We foster cooperative agreements with other farmers regarding livestock farming.

Sandstone employs the services of local business from time to time, and also hires casual labourers at harvest/planting time as well as for events.

With the increasing number of visitors to our events, we have also passed business to the hospitality industry in the area, to provide accommodation for these visitors.

All contribute significantly towards much-needed economic upliftment in the eastern Free State.

BIODIVERSITY & ECO TOURISM

Some time ago, Sandstone declared a 400 ha area around the main complex as being essentially organic, and no chemicals and no fertilizers are used other than natural compost. This has resulted in a great selection of Rye, Oats and Lucerne which of course stands our cattle in very good stead during the long, dry winter.

At some time, the land was a Game Reserve and so we still have Springbok and Blesbok on the farm which are prospering. They wander free mostly in the green zone that we refer to above, but sadly, there are few surviving predators.

While we accept that animals such as Lynx, Genet and Jackals can cause problems, we believe that they are the most effective deterrent against Kangaroo Rats which many farmers are struggling with in terms of crop damage.

The Sandstone philosophy is to let nature balance itself and not to interfere by isolating a particular species. Sandstone is proud to have regular visits from groups of birding enthusiasts as well.



Fauna at Sandstone Estates:

Springbok, Blesbok, Reed Buck, Duikers and Steenbok.

Slender Mongoose, Banded Mongoose, Cape Hare and Ground Squirrels.

Black Blacked Jackals and Wild Cats can also be seen on the farms.

Sunbird, Whydah, Francolin, Guinea Fowl, Heron, Ibis, Weaver, Crested Barbet, Egrets Hoepoe, Crane, Plover, Mouse Bird, Kestrel, Cape Eagle, Barn Owl and Harrier Hawk. The dams also host water fowl such as Moorhen and a variety of duck species.

Puff Adders, Rinkhals (Ring-Necked Spitting Cobra), Red Lipped and Common Brown Snake have also been observed.



Flora at Sandstone Estates:

Acacia "karoo" (Sweet Thorn), Celtis "africana" (White Stinkwood) Combretum "erythrophyllum" (Red river Bush Willow), Searsia "lancea" and "pendulina" (Karee) Olea "africana" (Wild Olive), Cosmos, Namaqualand Daisies (Dimorphotheca sinuate DC), and manymore.

Physically removing invasive species, turning them into compost



TOURISM DIVISION

From small beginnings as the Heritage Collection grew, Tourism continues to be developed as a revenue stream.

Our first-ever event, *The Great 100 Working*, was held in 1999. For a number of years the Railway was the prime attraction, but today it is the centrepiece of a broad Heritage experience for a visitor, unrivalled in the world. The Estate is open 365 days a year with selected Steam Weekends based around public holidays. Schools, social groups, clubs and even family reunions are hosted regularly.

Railway enthusiasts are also catered for, as many tour groups, particularly from overseas, visit us to experience The Sandstone Railway. With its stunning landscapes, lighting and scenery, as well as Heritage “props” such as cars and tractors, Sandstone is a photographer's paradise, too.

The corporate market holds conferences and product launches; we have hosted film shoots requiring the railway or vintage machinery as well. Our military vehicles and vintage buses have also starred in many movies shot in South Africa.

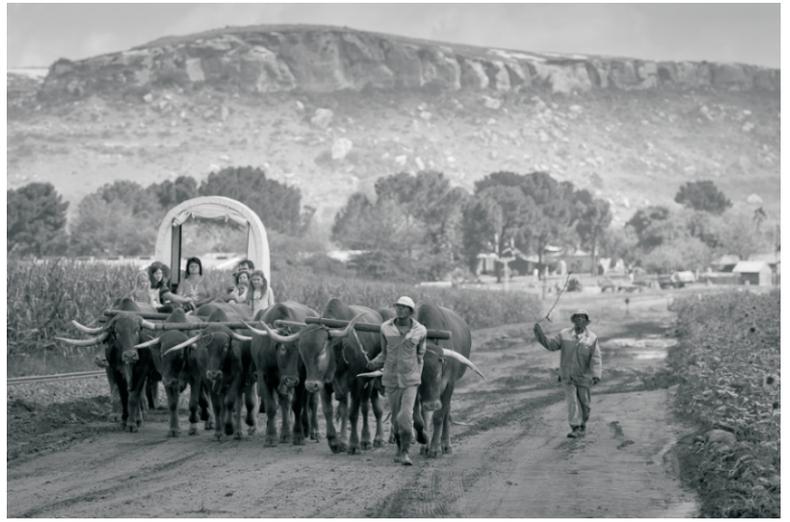
At Sandstone, not only can one enjoy a peaceful ride in a restored Ox Wagon or donkey cart, but one can also ride on a Casspir, Buffel, Ratel, and even in a restored Sherman Tank.

There is a dedicated group of Aviators who land their pre-WW2 bi-planes, Harvards and other light aircraft on Sandstone's long grass airstrip as they would have in days gone by. A special treat for any guest is a flip in a Harvard or Tiger Moth.

All this and more will be showcased in the third such major event known as *Stars of Sandstone* which will be held from 30 March to 9 April 2017. This 10-day interactive Heritage event has attracted 100s of bookings already.

An investment of R6,9m will see new facilities developed for early 2017, with a new kitchen and restaurant, and some re-purposed accommodation in ex-main line sleeper coaches.

A new mountain biking trail is being developed for this growing market and will feature as part of a major mountain bike competition later in 2017.



The Great Trek? Oh no - Stars of Sandstone 2015



Scenes from past events and gatherings, tours and family reunions held at Sandstone Estates





COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION

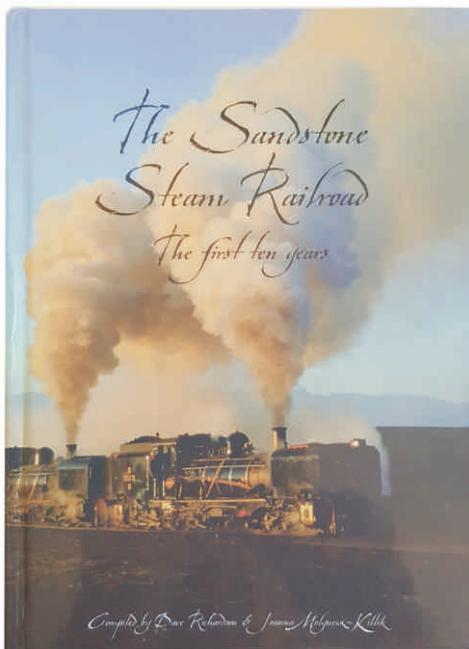
Due to the complexity and diversity of Sandstone activities, the website www.sandstone-estates.com is vast, with a great many links and articles to read. New articles are uploaded almost daily.

In addition, the Sandstone mailing list numbers more than 8000 readers worldwide — a large proportion of whom are railway and history enthusiasts, industry associates and even photographers.

- Weekly Steam Reports from the workshops
- Regular *Stars of Sandstone* Newsletters in the run-up to the event

A number of people are involved in this continuous process of promoting activities, not forgetting social media and print materials, newspaper advertising and production of video.

Sandstone Estates is proud to have a wide following around the world.



Published in 2006, *The Sandstone Steam Railroad - the first ten years* hardcopy book sold well internationally. Work is already under way to produce the 20-year anniversary coffee table book, to be published late 2016.

BOOK NOW TO EXPERIENCE THIS INTERACTIVE HERITAGE FESTIVAL

30 March to 9 April 2017
 Steam Trains, Vintage Aircraft, rides of all kinds, Classic & Military Vehicles, Agricultural Machinery & much more

Full details can be found at www.sandstone-estates.com or call Larissa 076 024 6188

Near Ficksburg: Eastern Free State
 Fly in to S28 50° 36" E028 00° 18"
 1000m grassed airstrip

Stars of Sandstone 2017

EXCITING STEAM WEEKENDS

DAY VISITORS ON STEAM WEEKENDS ONLY

Entrance Fee
 Adults R170 pp,
 Children under 12 R60 pp,
 under 5 years: FREE

UNLIMITED STEAM TRAIN RIDES INCLUDED
 read more at www.sandstone-estates.com

30 min excursion LESOTHO MEANDER
 Southern route toward the Lesotho Border.
 Departs 09h00, 11h00, 12h30, 14h30, 16h00 on Steam Weekends

90 min excursion MOUNTAIN WANDERER
 Travel entire 26km Sandstone Narrow Gauge Rail System.
 Departs 10h00 & 14h00 on Steam Weekends

ALSO AVAILABLE
 Walking Tours, Ox Wagon Rides
 Military Vehicle Rides & more
 Visit the Weenhuis Café!

BOOKING ESSENTIAL 051 933 2235 or 079 327 7649

FORTHCOMING STEAM WEEKENDS
 24 September • 17 to 19 November 2016

We trust that this has been an informative virtual tour for you.

Thank you for taking the time to read it, we look forward to seeing you at Sandstone Estates in the near future.

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Visit our website: www.sandstone-estates.com

"Preserving the best of our past for the future"

