



Tour 03/19 LCGB SOUTH AFRICA TOUR 2019 including Stars of Sandstone Festival

Circular 1 – April 2018

Our 2019 tour will be based on the Stars Festival at Sandstone. There will be return transfers provided between Johannesburg Airport and Ficksburg where we will be staying throughout the event. There will be an option to return with Geoff's Trains from Bethlehem to Germiston part steam hauled by the last surviving 12AR 1535 'Susan'. This has the triple distinction of being the last surviving Class 12AR, Reefsteamers' oldest operating locomotive and the oldest operating main line locomotive in South Africa. 'Little Susie' was originally built as a Class 12A at the North British Locomotive Works way back in 1919. The class 12's, from which the Class 12A's originated, were the first new locomotive class ordered by the then newly-formed SAR.

It will be necessary to leave the UK an evening flight Tuesday 2nd April 2019. Travel will be then made by coach to the Stars of Sandstone festival which starts on Thursday 4th April.

Wednesday 3rd April. Leave Johannesburg at 1200 noon. Arrive at the Imperani Guest Lodge at Ficksburg late afternoon. Dinner at Guest Lodge.

Thursday 4th April. Early transfer to Sandstone. Sunrise photo session. Breakfast at Sandstone. Lunch at own account at food court. Return to Guest Lodge for dinner. There will be 4 early morning photo sessions at the beginning of our visit. These should feature different locomotives each morning, both on the main line and on Seb's railway. There will be a transfer after breakfast from the Guest Lodge on all mornings for anyone not wanting to do the sunrise event.

Friday 5th, Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th April. Early transfer to Sandstone. Sunrise photo session. Breakfast at Sandstone. Lunch at own account at food court. Return to Guest Lodge for dinner.

Monday 8th April. Breakfast at Guest Lodge. Transfer to Sandstone at 0900. Lunch at own account at food court. Return to Guest Lodge for dinner.

Tuesday 9th April. Breakfast at Guest Lodge. Transfer to Sandstone at 0900. Lunch at own account at food court. Return to Guest Lodge for dinner. No sunrise photo sessions for the next 3 days, but these can be individually booked as an optional extra subject to availability.

Wednesday 10th April. Breakfast at Guest Lodge. Transfer to Sandstone at 0900. Lunch at own account at food court. Return to Guest Lodge for dinner.

Thursday 11th April. Breakfast at Guest Lodge. Transfer to Sandstone at 0900. Lunch at own account at food court. Return to Guest Lodge for dinner.

Friday 12th April. – Option 1

Breakfast at Guest Lodge. Depart for Johannesburg Airport, arriving about 15.00. Departure on evening flights.

The cost will be £1900 on a shared basis from Johannesburg. Single supplement £250. Participants will be requested to book their own flights. We can provide guidance as required including recommended flights with the group. A £200 deposit is required for this part of the tour. Dinners are not included but can be pre-ordered before morning departure.

Friday 12th April Bethlehem to Modderpoort – Option 2. Early coach transfer from Guest Lodge to Bethlehem for steam charter via Bloemfontein and Kimberley that will arrive in Germiston (Johannesburg) late on Tuesday 16th April, the tour ending with an airport transfer on the morning of Wednesday 17th April. Runpasts will be arranged at locations selected by experienced organisers, the number being determined by the time available. Overnight on the train standing in Modderpoort. Breakfast and dinner included. Lunch, light refreshments and bar will be available.

Saturday 13th April Modderpoort to Bloemfontein. Today, our train will make a trip from Modderpoort to Bloemfontein. Overnight on the train standing in Bloemfontein. Breakfast and dinner included. Lunch, light refreshments and bar will be available.

Sunday 14th April Bloemfontein to Kimberley. This morning, visit the Sandstone workshops and the national collection of locomotives at Bloemfontein. This afternoon, our train will make the trip from Bloemfontein to Kimberley. Runpasts will be staged as the train steams west into the afternoon light. Overnight on the train standing in Kimberley. Breakfast and dinner included. Lunch, light refreshments and bar will be available.

Monday 15th April Kimberley. Visit the Kimberley Big Hole Museum to explore the growth of the diamond industry. Your visit will include a tram ride and there are several railway and steam related exhibits. Later this morning, spend some time at the railway museum at Kimberley station, this small museum includes an exhibition hall with some interesting exhibits, as well as a platform display that includes a Class 25NC 4-8-4 locomotive. After a break for lunch, visit local preservation group Steamnet 2000. If available, they will have their Class 25NC in steam for a short run and photographic opportunity. Overnight on the train standing in Kimberley. Breakfast and dinner included. Lunch, light refreshments and bar will be available.

Tuesday 16th April Kimberley to Germiston. Our train and the steam locomotive will be hauled by Transnet freight Rail electric locomotives from Kimberley to Germiston as steam is not permitted on core routes. Three or four service stops will be needed, and photos may be possible, depending on the location and according to the safety rules. The train will stable for the night in the Reefsteamers depot, offering an opportunity for night photography. Overnight on the train standing in Reefsteamers Germiston depot. Breakfast and dinner included. Lunch, light refreshments and bar will be available.

Wednesday 17th April. The tour ends after breakfast this morning with an included transfer to Johannesburg airport

The train will comprise coaches for the Reefsteamers fleet. There will be sleeper accommodation for 75 passengers, a lounge and dining car. Accommodation is available in both Silver and Economy Class sleepers. Silver class has en-suite facilities and showers, economy class uses shared facilities. As silver class and single cabins are limited, early booking is recommended. There will be six sleeper coaches on the train. Three silver class coaches offer en-suite twin and single cabins. Three economy coaches offer shared showers and toilets, with single and three berth cabins. Supplements can reduce the number of occupants in three berth compartments. To keep the train weight within limits for the locomotive, the full kitchen car will not be in the consist, meals will be wholesome and adequate with continental style breakfasts, packed lunches and traditional South African evening meals, normally potjiekos or barbecues. Reducing the kitchen capacity means that we can take along the lounge / bar car, the decision was not too difficult to make.

Silver class: £2080: Per person sharing £1850: Supplement for single use of a twin cabin. There are a limited number of single rooms available at no surcharge. Book early!

Economy class: £1450: Per person sharing £1220: Supplement to leave one berth free in a three berth compartment. There are a limited number of single rooms available at no surcharge. A deposit of £200 is required for all options.

If you are travelling as a single person or with one other person, we will fill any empty berths for you unless you pay a surcharge for exclusive use of the cabin.

Meals: Breakfast is included in your booking, with a continental style dining car service. Lunch is not normally included. A light lunch can be ordered whilst on board. Dinners are included. Limited kitchen facilities dictate the type of meal served, this may be a braai (barbecue), traditional South African potjiekos (a hearty stew) or something similar with salads and desert. Light refreshments and bar will be available throughout the day on the train.

Deposits / final payments for this tour can be made directly to LCGB 82-13-03, A/c 20346642 with advice to the organiser. You can still pay by cheque. 3 sae's required if you do not use email.

Tour cost includes: Transfer from Guest Lodge to Bethlehem.
Accommodation on the train for up to five nights. Dinner, bed and breakfast.
Visits to museums and Steamnet 2000 in Kimberley.
Visits to Sandstone's Bloemfontein works and the national locomotive collection.
Transfer from Germiston depot to Johannesburg OR Tambo airport.
The services of the Geoff's Trains team

Tour cost does not include: Meals not included in the programme.
Items of a personal nature
Flights

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