

Dear Friends

Hello again from Anthea and me. I'm pleased to report that all is well on the Rovos front with sales improving and all our trains running as smoothly as can be expected. We experienced a poor start to the year with the Ebola crisis taking its toll, but by mid year this was behind us and we are now enjoying a much-improved second half.

On the workshop front we have commenced with the rebuild of eight more carriages amongst which are two dining cars. We are also hard at work commissioning the six diesel locomotives we imported from Australia in January and am delighted to confirm that two of them have already been to Dar es Salaam and back – the ultimate test.

Our guesthouses in St James are settling down satisfactorily and we are pleased to see occupancies improving. Such a lovely area of Cape Town.

The forward business is looking reasonably strong and it is certainly encouraging to note numerous enquiries coming through for 2017, mostly of course for the longer journeys with our golf tours attracting considerable attention. All in all, we are very positive about the trend and are planning accordingly for growth.

Well, 2016 is fast approaching and besides wishing you the best for the coming festive season, we do hope the New Year brings everything you wish for. Look forward to having you on board again.

Rohan and Anthea




Rohan and Anthea with granddaughter Tallulah



Rebuilt DIESEL and ELECTRIC Locomotives for Rovos

In March 2009, Rovos Rail purchased nine electric locos, all of which have now been restored to working order. They have been acquired to provide future traction insurance and will be well suited for the load of the trains on the electrified routes to Cape Town, Durban and Kruger Park.

The units were part of the final batch of 255 Class 5E1 locos built between 1966 and 1969 by Union Carriage & Wagon Company of Nigel, Transvaal. Electrical equipment was supplied by AEI and English Electric.

Numbering 690 in total, the Class 5E1s were general workhorses, both for freight and passenger traffic. The last to be withdrawn from service, which included the locos purchased by Rovos Rail, were deemed surplus to requirements and were thus in relatively good condition and could be returned to traffic with relatively low cost implications.

In 2014, Rovos Rail purchased six surplus diesel locos from Aurizon, a major Australian rail operator. They were shipped from Perth to Durban then by rail to Pretoria in January 2015.

Five of the locos were of the DD Class, built by Clyde Engineering in Australia between 1970 and 1972. They were originally Queensland Rail's 2100 Class. These 2200hp locos were originally used on coal trains in Queensland before being displaced by electrification. In 2007, five locos were stripped down, rebuilt and sent

to Perth for general freight operations, there becoming the DD Class. In 2013 they were withdrawn from service. The sixth was D Class 1562, originally built for the West Australian Railways. The major work required on all the locos was the installation of a vacuum braking system to make them compatible with our rolling stock.

We are very pleased to announce that loco No. 1562 (with a gearbox ratio of 64:13) hauled the entire train of 22 rail cars plus a 110-ton diesel loco up the challenging incline between Mlimba and Makambako in Tanzania. This 150km section crosses 46 bridges and traverses 18 tunnels and has a 1:50 gradient with bends for most of the route. This was the ultimate test and fully justified the gamble taken buying these machines at auction.

Pictured above are the diesel locos being brought up to standard for our operations. Two have already done over 10 000km in front of our train and pleasingly have proved themselves capable of handling a 900-ton load up the maximum gradient experienced on our routes. Below is the 5E1 electric loco.



Journey Notebook



Victoria Falls extended.....

Extending this journey from two nights to three has pleasingly worked well with guests reporting that the Hwange National Park excursion is successful. We've also managed to minimise operational problems we previously experienced. For details, please contact reservations@rovos.co.za or visit www.rovos.com.



Namibia Safari highlight.....

This nine-day safari has become a real little darling. It took us a few years to get traction but we're happy to report that, due to popular demand, we have added an additional departure to the schedule so now the train travels both in April and May. The addition of the overnight experience in Sossusvlei with the light-aircraft flight proved very popular and a highlight of the journey. For details, please contact querida@rovos.co.za or visit www.rovos.com.



Dar es Salaam to 15 nights.....

In its 22nd year, the Dar journey still continues to provide guests with an adventurous sojourn across five countries. Adding an additional night to make the trip 15 days rather than 14 has proved a success, and the game drive in the Selous is also receiving great feedback. There is still limited space available in the first half of 2016. Please contact alicia@rovos.co.za or visit www.rovos.com.



Rohan's Congo to Angola adventure



In December 2014 I visited Angola with the intention of travelling by train on the newly rebuilt C.F.B. line between the port of Lobito, Benguela and the border town of Dilolo, 1350km to the east. This Chinese rebuilt line is a remarkable milestone in Angola's return to normality after 20-odd years of civil war. The intention is to open the way for copper and other minerals to be exported from Kolwezi in the Katanga Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and obviously to facilitate imports from the coast to Lubumbashi. The only obstacle to this is the parlous state of the line in DRC from Dilolo to Lubumbashi.

To investigate this line, I hired a motorised trolley from the S.N.C.C. Railways and with driver, technician and translator travelled along the 425km line between Kolwezi and Dilolo. This took four days and was an adventure to say the least. The line is used once a month or so for passengers and due to the lack of undergrowth control it can take the train a week to traverse the 400-odd kilometres. Derailments are also a common occurrence on this stretch.

So, regrettably, the idea of running our train from Zambia through to the Angolan port of Lobito is not practical at present. When the DRC section is rehabilitated it will be feasible. I can only speculate that the undertaking of this task will now become high priority with major pressure being exerted by the Angolans with their shiny new line having nowhere to go! Update next year.



From top: The new Benguela Station; Dilolo Station on the DRC Angolan border; during my inspection of the Kolwezi Dilolo (DRC) line, we derailed after hitting a well-placed tree.

Bev Cain and her handmade teddies BY ANTHEA VOS

On an early Dar es Salaam trip we had two delightful Australian ladies, Dawn and Annike, who travelled everywhere accompanied by teddies they collected the world over. At their suggestion, the Rovos collection of limited-edition teddies slowly evolved when, in 1998, I met Bev Duncan who had a small barrow in the V&A Waterfront Shopping Centre full of her handmade teddies.

We started a 17-year friendship with Bev painstakingly producing 20 collections (50 to a set) of customised, handmade

Rovos teddies and 600 kiddies bears. Bev took great delight at the thought of her teddies living worldwide.

Very sadly, Bev developed a brain tumour in December 2013 and after a long, hard-fought battle we lost her in April 2015. I do hope all of you who may have one of our teddies hold it close to your heart and remember this bright, beautiful and talented lady.



Coach building at our station

In March this year we commenced the construction of four new deluxe carriages, a lounge car, kitchen car and two dining cars, one being of the 1924 pillared design. The coaches we have purchased from the railways for the purpose are really bottom of the barrel from a condition point of view – only shells left after being stripped by vandals of any item of value. Needless to say our workshop is a hive of activity.



St James MEET THE TEAM

Lee-Anne Koller is the manager of our three guesthouses in Cape Town and is supported by Goodnews, Amanda, Patricia, Clive, Ernest, Vuyo, Nonthlanhla and Nokulunga.



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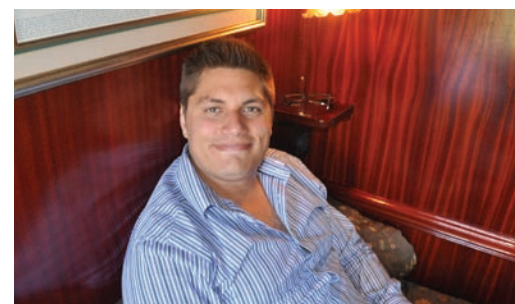
ROVOS CLUB

"repeat offenders"

Rohan affectionately refers to our Club members as his "repeat offenders" and was tickled pink when the Diggles and Harmers sent us Rovos green T-shirts they had printed with this bestowed title. The couples met on board the train and have become lifelong friends who travel together each year – a heartwarming story.

We are immensely chuffed that the Club members leading the pack in terms of trips travelled are South African. Mrs Buchanan recently joined us on her 55th journey and she is followed by Keoma Wright, 31 trips, and Juan-Gerhard Wright who is on 28! We are in awe of your patronage and thank you so much for joining our family time and time again.

Below: Regádo with Mrs Buchanan. Right: Rohan and Brenda.



From top: Keoma Wright (31 trips) and Juan-Gerhard Wright (28 trips).

Brenda Vos, our Communications Manager who oversees the Rovos Club with Regádo Lewis, would like to appeal to all members to submit any images or videos from their journeys with us that they wouldn't mind being shared across our various social media and marketing platforms. In fact, one of the ideas Brenda is working on and for which she is badgering Rohan for budget, is a short video made up of all the material submitted by members. We think it makes for a lovely concept and would be a small token of our appreciation. Also, if you would like to pen a story for us, we would be delighted to read some of your favourite or entertaining memories of life on board! Please send to brenda@rovos.co.za. To our members we say a very big thank you! Many of you have become friends and it is great seeing your familiar faces on board.

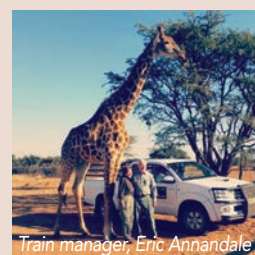
Please do keep in touch with Regádo (reservations) and Brenda (marketing) regarding any Club-related matters. If you are on Facebook or Instagram or any other platform then don't forget to tag us so we can share your pics and videos.

@rovosrailand

@rovosrail

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@rovosrailand



How does it work?

A large majority of our guests see a trip on Rovos Rail as a 'once in a lifetime experience'. However, many of them – once they have travelled – feel that the 'once in a lifetime' should definitely be repeated and shared. We also have our train enthusiasts who find train travel to be a necessity of life.

Throughout our decades of operation we have always aspired to maintain a high standard of personal service whilst meeting the individual needs of our valued guests. The Rovos Club is an extension of this policy as it gives us the agreeable opportunity to thank all of our repeat customers for their support and loyalty through a personalised incentive-based programme.

Our 'Repeat Offenders' will be eligible for a variety of incremental discounts once they have registered with the Rovos Club. These discounts are based on the individual travel history of each Club Member.

To register with the Rovos Club, one must have travelled with Rovos Rail twice. Club status may be awarded on the booking confirmation of a second journey. If you are eligible for Club status, please use the Club Registration Form on www.rovos.com or contact Regádo: +27 (0) 12 315 8242 or regardo@rovos.co.za.

For more information about the incentives offered by the Rovos Club, please refer to the table below or use the aforementioned contact details.

ROVOS CLUB MEMBER INCENTIVES

These discounts are available to Club Members only and are subject to availability

2	Eligible for registration with the Rovos Club.
3	10% discount on a regular route or a 12% discount on an annual journey
4	15% discount on a regular route or a 14% discount on an annual journey
5	20% discount on a regular route or a 16% discount on an annual journey
6	25% discount on a regular route or an 18% discount on an annual journey
7	1 complimentary suite on a regular route and a 20% discount on an annual journey
8	15% discount on a regular route or a 20% discount on an annual journey
9	20% discount on a regular route or a 20% discount on an annual journey
10	25% discount on a regular route or a 20% discount on an annual journey
11	30% discount on a regular route or a 20% discount on an annual journey
12	1 complimentary suite on a regular route and a 20% discount on an annual journey
More than 12	Automatic 20% discount on all regular routes and a 20% discount on all annual journeys
	1 complimentary suite on a regular route every 5th journey, e.g. number 17, 22, 27, 32 etc.



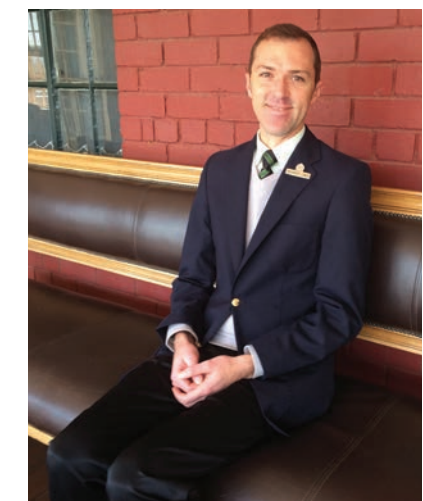
Our very own Rovos Rail Blog

At long last we have our own blog! It's been something we have been wanting to write for years as the Rovos stories can be interesting, sweet, charming, poignant, sometimes naughty and also very funny! We will be 27 next year so there are many tales to share. If you would like to contribute to the blog by writing about your Rovos experience or if you'd prefer to pen a review or share an anecdote then please get in touch brenda@rovos.co.za. We welcome guest writers with open arms and look forward to hearing from you. Visit www.blog.rovos.com.



Regádo to the rescue

The saying goes 'give credit where credit is due' and so we would like to thank Regádo Lewis from our reservations team who tirelessly and meticulously pieced our scattered database together. It has taken him an entire year and he has managed to track passengers and journeys as far back as 1989! Thank you Regádo, we are indebted to you and appreciate you taking on this mammoth task. Well done too for your 12 years with the company.



Staff News

It's been quite a year for the Rovos office staff with a sad goodbye said to **Sandy Ingram**, our fearless redhead who was with us for 20 years before she retired. In Sandy's stead we welcomed **Charlotte Sullivan** who works with Lorraine in our Cape Town office.

At Rovos headquarters in Pretoria we promoted **Zodwa Sithole** from Deputy Train Manager to a permanent position in reservations. We welcomed **Shane Seagreen** as our new IT administrator, **Magda Strydom** and **Lizelle Opperman** joined the finance team and **Lucinda du Plessis**, a Gift Shop Hostess on the train, also joined the finance team on a part-time basis.



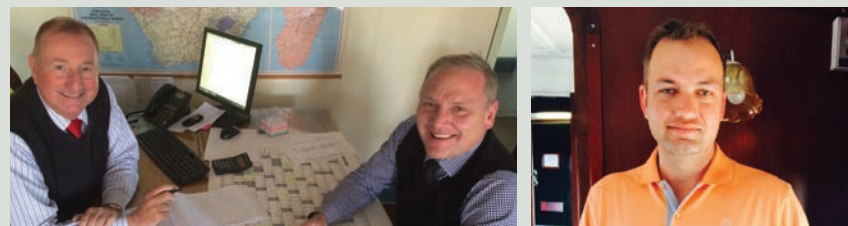
Lizelle Opperman



Charlotte Sullivan



From left: Magda Strydom, Zodwa Sithole, Lucinda du Plessis and Shane Seagreen



Edward Mitchell and Ian Morrison

Alwyn Voster

Edward Mitchell, our Sales Manager, is moving to the UK at the end of the year and will be marketing our golf tours. **Ian Morrison** takes over from Ed as Sales Manager in January of 2016.

Those who have travelled either the Golf Safari or African Golf Collage will know **Alwyn Voster**, the golf manager for these two trips. Alwyn also now has the official title of being our golf representative in the United States.

Standing: Adam Bentley, Eric Annandale, Gareth Van Wyk. Seated: Mart Marais, Joe Mathala, Daphne Mabala.



Farewell to Jennifer Vos

BY ROHAN VOS

My sister Jennifer Vos joined our sales team in 1996 and took on the responsibility of promoting our company in Australia and New Zealand. She was based in the Byron Bay area most of the time but for her retirement has now moved to Ulraba, further south in New South Wales. She certainly managed to promote the product successfully as Australia is now in our top four right behind USA, UK and Germany. Thank you Jennifer for your efforts and wishing you the best in Ulraba.



Estee Badenhorst has taken over this market from Jennifer and can be reached on estee@rovos.co.za.

Thank you TRAIN MANAGERS

The train manager's role is diverse and the set of skills required (and acquired) could make up an entire resume. From understanding the mechanics of each coach and what is required to keep moving forward, from a delicate and sometimes moody electrical system and the water supply to the entire train, wheels which can be a constant headache, managing a full complement of staff and maintaining balance on board with guests who are from all corners of the globe. It is not easy yet our team handle themselves with courteous professionalism, diplomacy and a level of quick and proactive thinking, which is impressive.

Collectively they have been with us for 81 years with Joe and Daphne leading the pack; Joe sees 26 years with us and Daphne, 22. It's a tough job with many sleepless nights especially on a long journey such as Dar es Salaam.

To the six of you we say thank you. Your dedication and loyalty to the dynamic roles you play is appreciated and we are grateful for your years of service.

We Support

In the past year we have supported the **Life Matters Foundation**, Cape Town **Pride**, a benefit dinner for Brian Mulder, **Pink Drive**, the **Woolworths Trust**, **Rhinos Without Borders** and **Johannesburg Child Welfare**. We continue to make contributions to the following worthy organisations:

- **Thembelihle Primary School** - www.thembelihleschool.co.za
- **David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust** in Kenya - www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org
- We were recently introduced to the wonderful team at the **Good Work Foundation** whose mission it is to educate rural South Africa through teaching English, digital learning and life skills - www.goodworkfoundation.org



From top left: Delivering goods to Carolyn Hancock of Thembelihle Primary School; children at Thembelihle with new books; one of the carers at David Sheldrick with an orphaned elephant.

Just Hitched!

Karin Whitaker, formerly Lombard, married Kevin in November 2014.

Querida Nel, formerly Venter, married Jaco in December 2014.

Gareth van Wyk married Victoria in August 2015.



Farewell Sandy

BY ROHAN VOS

Sandy Ingram joined Rovos Rail on 1st July 1994 and reminded me lately of her very short interview with me on the platform in Pretoria. She certainly had no knowledge of trains, and not much more of reservations, which was the role I had in mind for her. Notwithstanding these limitations, she jumped in the deep end and in no time at all had taken control of the fledgling division. Twenty years later she was overseeing the labours of five others let alone telling me how to run the business.

Sandy certainly became a famous character in the Rovos Rail story; she will always be remembered for her larger than life presence and her similarly raucous laugh, and can be proud of her loyal achievements with the company. We wish her good luck, health and happiness in her well-earned retirement.



Roll of Honour



25 years **Connie Nkuna**



20 years **Catherine Baloyi**, **Marielle Wynbergen**, **Sarah Seramula**, **Melody Maishman**, **Kenny Winnaar** and **Karin Lombard**. Absent from the picture is **Kleinboi Thelele**.



15 years **Lorraine Liebenberg**

Stork Deliveries!

November 2014 **Joyce Nkosi**, had a girl, Bokamoso Dimpho Olwethu. December 2014 **Dorkas Mothimba** had a girl, Reitumetse Annah Mothiba. **Given Mthembu** welcomed a son, Lungile.

Francoise Furaha had a boy, Glory Odari. **Philda Khanye** had a boy, Omphemetse Lehakwe Khanye. **Busi Masimula** had a girl, Amogelang Tryphinah Masimula. **Sandra Hadzhi** had a girl, Mohau Hadzhi.

WE REMEMBER

Des Paton, our boilermaker, passed away at age 86 and **Charles Hewitt**, a welder in our loco department. Our sincerest condolences to their family and friends.

DC3 and Convairs send off

We bid "Delaney" our beautiful DC3 aircraft farewell, having sold her to Menno Parsons, a well-known classic aircraft collector in South Africa. During a scheduled flight in October of 1975, between Sishen and Johannesburg for United Airlines, a baby girl was born on board at 17h55. The baby was called "Delaney", a name the aircraft sports to this day. We have donated one of our Convair aircraft, ZS-ARV, to the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society in Sydney. We have been working with Maureen Massey (Vice President) and David Neaves (Treasurer) in Australia on the exchange and Chris Barnard, who worked for us on the aircraft when we first purchased them, is working with Braam Fourie to airworthy the aircraft for its flight down under. This will take six to nine months and the work is being done at Wonderboom Airport in Pretoria.



Animal update from our station

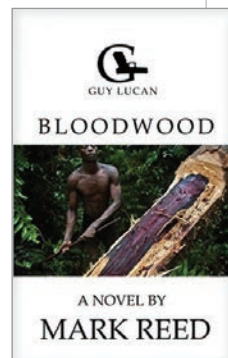
We sadly said goodbye to Lady, our resident cat who reigned supreme. Lady was born at the station and lived a long, free and contented life with us. She took up residence in Melody's office and could often be found sprawled across her desk or snoozing on top of the photocopier. In her spare time she rescued a litter of baby bunnies and kept the bird population in check. Her feisty and indifferent presence will be missed.

Who in their right minds rescues chickens and a hadeda? We do of course. Our little hadeda, Dora, can often be seen strolling around the station platform and our handsome hens and busy roosters enjoy a good tussle with the peacocks. Other than that our alpaca, Donatello, has made firm friends with the horse and donkeys and this little gang of four give the ostriches a run for their money!



RAILWAY READING *Bloodwood*

(Guy Lucan #1) by Mark Reed: "Guy Lucan is an English railway engineer employed by a New York-based consulting firm. He is posted to Madagascar as part of a World Bank contract to assist with the regeneration of the island's 100-year-old French colonial railway network. He becomes a Sherlock Holmes as he is kidnapped by illegal loggers but escapes with the help of his beautiful Malagasy lover." House of Christie 2015



Welcome Tallulah

Rohan and Anthea welcomed their first grandchild Tallulah to the family on the 16th of January. Born to their son, Shaun, and his wife, Lucie, Tallulah is a bright little miss and as cute as a button!

Below from left: Lady; a proud hen with her chicks; Karin feeding Dora; alpaca Donatello.