

Newsletter

March 2021

DRISA in short

DRISA is in the process to publish a searchable catalogue of the Transnet Image collection, with a thumbnail of each image, as well as all the pages of the SAR&H Magazine. This resource is freely accessible on the internet to railway and history researchers all over the world.

DRISA provides raw thumbnails with brief descriptions. Images are not cropped or enhanced, with no attempt to remove duplicates. Should images be required for illustration or publication, the high-resolution versions are available from the Transnet Heritage Library (THL). Users can digitally restore and enhance the images to suit their own purposes.

Since the previous newsletter...

Our previous newsletter of April 2020 was sent almost a year ago. It was then announced that the work done by the DRISA assistants had to be suspended due to Transnet lockdown requirements – a situation which is still continuing to great frustration. Yolanda is allowed to visit the library once or twice a week and manages to respond to many of the queries raised by DRISA visitors. Despite all this, DRISA can report the following:

- The scanning of images is now restricted to those requested by users, which can be managed within the limits to what Yolanda can manage. DRISA is thankful for her continued and significant support to DRISA.
- The descriptions of the roughly 23 000 images on the internet are steadily being improved. DRISA receives smaller corrections from many contributors on a continuous basis. Special mention must be made of Leith Paxton (rolling stock), John Austin Williams (aircraft and South African Airways) and Dean McLeland (Port Elizabeth) for their meticulous and systematic checking and improvement of the catalogue.
- The main focus of DRISA during the past year was on the SAR&H Magazine, a project which could be continued without being in the library. More about this under the next heading.
- It was gratifying to observe the increased visibility and use of the DRISA website at www.drisa.co.za. The total visits were the following:

- 2017 3956
 - 2018 4998
 - 2019 5012
 - 2020 9254
- A number of publications appeared which made use of the DRISA platform. Charlie Lewis and his co-workers regularly publish images from the Transnet Heritage Library on their wonderful ***Soul of a Railway***. Internationally, recent publications include a history of SAA (South African Airways), an article on the Boeing 747's of the SAA in a French aeronautical magazine, and a book based on the diaries of Thomas Muir, educationist in the Cape Colony.
 - (The latter ***Thomas Muir: 'Lad O' Pairs'*** by Peter Elliott was published in January and is available worldwide on Amazon as a paperback and e-Book. It is also available at Clarke's Bookshop and Select Books in Cape Town; IH Pentz Booksellers in Johannesburg; and Van Schaik Bookstore in Grahamstown. Muir visited large parts of the Cape Colony with a special caboose and many of the erstwhile train stations are shown.)

Newly published parts of the SAR&H Magazine

The SAR&H Magazine was published until March 1967, then superceded by the SASSAR Magazine. At the time of the previous newsletter, all its issues up to December 1945 were on the internet. DRISA is now pleased to announce the addition of all the issues from January 1956 to March 1967. This leaves a gap of ten years, from January 1946 to December 1955, which is currently being worked on. A number of improvements were made:

- A decision was made to scan and publish ALL pages, including the commercial pages at the front (and back in many cases) of each issue, prompted by requests from users.
- Each page is now in a frame (example below) with a complete reference below, to assist researchers to print selected pages without having to record separately the page and volume numbers.

The following remains to be done:

- All the earlier issues have to be revisited to scan the commercial pages.
- All missing pages have to be found from other collections and included. (From 1956 onwards, users will see a NOTE with every issue which indicates whether the issue is complete, or listing the missing page numbers.)
- The very old pages (up to about 1915) will have to be rescanned to improve their quality.

For numerophiles:

- The total page count is estimated at 124 000 pages.
- A total of 61 000 pages had been published before this newsletter.
- A total of 21 000 new published pages are being added with this newsletter.
- The SAR&H Magazine project is now 66% complete.

Contact details

For questions and comments, please contact Johannes Haarhoff at johannes@haarhoff.org.za, Yolanda Meyer at Yolanda.meyer@transnet.net or visit www.drisa.co.za .

EDITORIAL
REDAKSIONEEL



THANK YOU!

This is the last issue to appear under the present title and in this format. Next month will see the publication of SASSAR in a format of 297 mm. x 210 mm.

Having reached the end of an uninterrupted series of far more than 700 issues in the present format and the time having come to say goodbye to the title *South African Railways and Harbours Magazine*, we here on the Magazine would like to express our sincere thanks to you out there for your support during all the years — Our readers for their goodwill; our contributors for news items and photos; our printers who so willingly cooperate every month and last but not least our advertisers without whose ample support we would never make the grade. Within our own ranks we wish to express sincere thanks to our Managing Editor and our Magazine Committee.

It is our sincere wish that SASSAR will meet with general approval.

BAIE DANKIE!

Hierdie uitgawe is die laaste wat onder die huidige benaming en in hierdie formaat sal verskyn. Volgende maand gaan SASSAR die lig sien in 'n formaat van 297 mm. x 210 mm.

Waar ons dus nou aan die einde gekom het van 'n onafgebroke reeks van ver oor die 700 uitgawes in die huidige formaat en moet afskeid neem van die bekende benaming *Tydskrif van die Suid-Afrikaanse Spoorweë en Hawens*, wil ons gebruik maak van die geleentheid om namens ons almal hier op die Tydskrif vir u daar buite baie dankie te sê vir u ondersteuning deur die baie jare — Ons lesers vir hulle welwillendheid; ons medewerkers wat ons so getrou bystaan met nuus-items en foto's; ons drukkers wat elke maand so gewillig saamwerk en, les bes, ons adverteerders, sonder wie se ruime ondersteuning ons nooit die mas sal opkom nie.

Binne ons eie geleedere is daar ons Besturende Redakteur en ons Tydskrifkomitee. Aan al hierdie here ons opregte dank.

South African Railways and Harbours Magazine

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From <http://www.drisa.co.za>