



Can you help save this crane?



A big cast iron name for a big hook.



The boom Wagon's Builder's Plate.  
Metro-Camel Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd  
Midland Works Birmingham 1948

We are very fortunate to have had a 36ton Booth Steam Crane loaned to us by Spoornet for preservation. Some years back, the Germiston Diesel Depot sent the crane over to us for safe keeping and eventual restoration by Reefsteamers. The crane is ex SAR (South Africans Railways) No. 96 Serial No. 4317/1936.

Although she is currently complete and in a mechanically working condition, her boiler has not been done and she does need some work done, including a full cosmetic restoration. This project is in the pipeline and we would like to get a small team of members together to make a project of it.

Anybody out there interested in the challenge and in saving a unique piece of railway heritage?

Even though the crane cannot be steamed, we do use her for work around our depot and she does come in very handy from time to time. We connect her directly to the huge compressor plant that we have at our depot and she goes on quite happily doing her business. It is a beautiful sight to see her operating.

Something has come up though regarding our Booth crane that we have managed to keep under cover and safe from theft over the years! We understand that Spoornet has re-submitted a tender document for the scrapping of most of the old redundant steam cranes all around South Africa. Our Booth Steam Crane, No. 96 is part of that tender!

We have tried to make contact with the relevant people within Spoornet, so that they could either assist us or put us in the right direction, but to no avail. We have not managed to get hold of the right person(s) and nobody seems to know anything about this crane. **Could someone from Spoornet who is reading this article please make contact with us so we can at least either set up a formal lease lend agreement or make a reasonable offer to purchase this Steam Crane from Spoornet?**

**We'd like to know what is the view from our website visitors with regard to this matter?**

We had not even been made aware of this decision and see no reason why such a tender should be re-issued.

You can email us at [elize@reefsteamers.co.za](mailto:elize@reefsteamers.co.za).

We include some pictures of this great old crane in action below - enjoy them.

Thank you for your support,

Shaun Ackerman  
Reefsteamers Association  
HRASA Representative



This old crane raises her boom in the sunlight after months of safe but shadowy under-cover storage on the end track in our depot. All the bearings, pivots and the slew rings have been kept lubricated and the old crane swung into position with ease.



The only thing missing here is smoke issuing from the vertical boiler. Still, with nothing to be ashamed of, the compressed air powered crane makes short work of lifting this donated lathe from the flat car.





Above : Here you can clearly see the compressed air line that was used to charge the boiler. This crane is 95% complete and the winch, boom and slew gear are fully functional.

Right : The raised boom makes an intimidating and impressive sight as the elevation thereof is used to align the hook with the load on the flat car.

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