



Shunting the Shongololo :

A letter and some pictures sent to us from a friend of Reefsteamers.
All pictures are displayed with kind permission of Peter Micenko.

Dear Aidan* and Shaun*,

It was good to see you guys again and I was very impressed with the progress made at Reefsteamers : not only with the locomotive restoration, but also the cleanliness, access and security improvements to the Depot.

I enclose a few photos of the Class 15CA ** , which was in steam that day and busy shunting the Shongololo Express train in your depot. I did see the afternoon run with the train out to Nasrec, which not only enabled me to see and hear the CA in action, but also to see the big viaduct, which, of course I knew about technically from my time in Spoornet, but was the first time I had seen it in real life.

Please feel free to use these shots on your Reefsteamers web site with credits.

Having read a lot on the net of problems running steam in South Africa, I did not expect to see anything running. These big ALCO engines are quite scarce amongst the preservation people despite their being so easy to maintain and work. The feedback that I had back in the steam days was that, after the 25NC's, the 15CA's were the cheapest engines to maintain.

I enjoyed the sight all the more so, because these are the engines upon which I originally learned to fire, and also the engines upon on which I worked on the former South African Railways

Best wishes
Peter
* (Aidan Mc. Carthy and Shaun Ackerman)
** (Reefsteamers Class 15CA #2056 "Dorothy")



Reefsteamers Driver Attie de Necker applies brakes during the shunt.



Nearly finished! Dorothy is running gently past the Shongololo Express stock with the safeties lifting.



Class 15CA "Dorothy" waits for the points to be set up and rests her coupling rods in the yard lead. She's already been coaled-up for the run to Nasrec.



Class 15CA lopes in confidently through the Eastern Throat of our Germiston Depot. The locomotive has just been turned on the balloon track and is coming in for a drink, before coupling up to the train and heading out west.



A big ALCO lines up for a drink in the properly mannered locomotive way - from a water tower, directly into the tender intake chute.
Not a fire hose or water pump in sight!



Rear top-dead-center - RHS piston . The radius rod sits in the center of the expansion link while the cylinders blow steam through the cylinder cocks. Those running boards are head-high to a 6ft man - impressive for a "Cape Gauge" Locomotive!

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