

# FUNDING REQUIRED FOR REFURBISHMENT OF EX S.A.R. LOCOMOTIVE No. 1486 (CLASS 3BR)



Until her withdrawal from service earlier this year, Umgeni Steam Railway's locomotive No. 1486 "*Maureen*" was the oldest working locomotive in South Africa. She is one of twelve Class 3B locomotives that formed part of the first motive power orders placed by the South African Railways after its formation with the amalgamation of the CGR, CSAR and NGR in 1910, and was placed in service in February 1912 – exactly 100 years ago!

Designed as dedicated "mountain climbers", No. 1486 and her sisters spent much of their early lives on the severe 1:30 gradients and 90m radius curves of the original Natal Main Line, hauling both goods and passenger trains, including the prestigious *Corridor Dining Express*, which ran for many years between Durban and Johannesburg and was the forerunner of the *Trans-Natal*.

The Class 3B engines were reboilered in the 1930's (and reclassified 3BR), which made them more efficient and improved their maintenance characteristics. However, they were eventually displaced by larger locomotives, whereupon the class was relegated to heavy shunting duties at various depots around the country.

Sometime in the early 1970s No. 1486 was withdrawn from active SAR service and sold into industrial use. With its excellent hauling capabilities, No. 1486 saw a further 25 years' of hard work on various coal mines, finally ending up at the Umgala Colliery at Utrecht, near Newcastle. By the late 1990s this mine was scaling down operations and had already handed its railway haulage work over to a private contractor that used its own diesels. As the locomotive was surplus to requirements, it was readily donated to USR, which was in dire need of suitable motive power for heritage railway operations on the lower end of the Natal Main Line – a section of track that still abounds with tortuous curves and gradients.

The volunteers from the USR spent about 18 months lovingly restoring No. 1486 to her original main line standard and approval was finally obtained from Transnet to use her on heritage passenger trains on the Old Main Line between Pinetown and Cato Ridge. She has since given almost 15 years of faithful service to USR, but this has sadly come to an end as she reached the point where she is in need of an extensive overhaul, the costs of which are unfortunately way beyond the capabilities of a small preservation group like Umgeni Steam Railway. Without this major work, No. 1486 is destined to become a "static exhibit" – a rather ignominious fate for a locomotive with an illustrious career spanning a century!



ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED UNDER SECTION 21  
REGISTRATION NUMBER 1994/005381/08

## COST OF RESTORATION

Umgeni Steam Railway is urgently looking for assistance in raising the approximately R1.4 million required to undertake the necessary boiler and other mechanical work on this engine – virtually all of this money is needed for materials, machining and crange, as the physical work would be undertaken wherever possible by the volunteers themselves.

## DONATION DETAILS

**Bank:** NEDBANK

**Bank account name:**  
UMGENI STEAM RAILWAY

**Account No:** 1301259314

**Branch Code:** 130126 (MUSGRAVE)

**Ref:** 3BR Restoration/Donor Name

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P.O. Box 559  
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