Report:
Transport in Namaqualand

by
Juan Smith
Toestemmingsbrief: gebruik van inligting.

Hiermee gee ek, Gerhardus Mostert, toestemming; dat inligting soos deur my verskaf - deur bogenoemde skool vir opvoedkundige doeleindes gebruik mag word.

Handtekening van respondent: Gerhardus Mostert

Byvoorbaat dank.

Die uwe

A. Thomas
Opvoeder
8. Resources:

Port Nolloth Museum  Me. Theresa Van Baalen  Curator
Richtersveld Tours  Mr. Gerhardus Mostert  ex-Guide
Richtersveld Conservancy  Mr. Gert Links  Manager

9. List of appendixes:

Appendix  1  Questionnaire
          2  Transcription of interview.
          3  Acceptance for letter to interviewees
This is what is left in our town from the railroad that once was.
Traces of the railway still visible today

5 Mile Station or what's left today.
Rails on harbour in Port Nolloth.

Carriages carrying passengers were called “Specials”
Remains of the Railway Hotel at Klipfontein

Remains of water towers
6. Conclusion:
The last train from Port Nolloth made the last complete run in 1942 and the line was torn up for the sale of the metal and sleepers in 1944. Today Government is investigating the cost effectiveness of a railway system from Kimberley to Port Nolloth. It is my understanding that the growth of our towns were put in "fast forward" mode by the transport sector. The import and export of products and accessibility to the area through railways serve as the main catalyst for development, and by investing in a railroad to Namaqualand we can hope for economic growth once more.

7. Gallery

![Mule train to Okiep](image-url)
5. Railway:
Difficulties which were experienced in riding copper ore by wagon to the ports, consisted of three factors:
(1) the lack of roads through the Harderweld;
(2) the struggle which the animals had in dragging their heavy loads through the soft Sandveld for about thirty kilometre; and
(3) the lack of water and fodder for the animals, especially during the summer months.

In view of the tremendous impact which railways were having on mobility overseas, it was logical that peoples' thoughts should turn to the provision of a railroad on the copper route. When the export of copper ore rose to over 1,000 tons per year government introduced a narrow gauge rail system in Namaqualand, linking Concordia, Nababeep, Okiep and Port Nolloth. The method of traction used on the line was the use of mules. Later in 1871 a light steam locomotive, the "John King" started working. Apparently the locomotive performed well, doing daily the work of 500 mules. The great drawback was that it used a lot of water, and water being very limited, the mines did not immediately do away with their mule teams, but kept them for use in severe droughts, since the mules used less water than the locomotives.

Another steam locomotive was introduced, but unfortunately these little engines proved prone to expensive mechanical breakdowns and mules were used over the whole length of the track - with the exception of the down run from Klipfontein. The custom on the down run was to couple the trucks together at Klipfontein, at the top of Anenous Pass, and allow them to run by gravity all the way to the Port, with brakemen on each truck checking the speed on the steeper sections.

At that time the Cape Copper Mining Company had 220 mules, 18 donkeys and 23 horses. In the days of mule traction forty to sixty mules were used to pull the average train in which the freight wagons were connected in threes, pulled by six mules in single file. Up Anenous Mountain pass the teams were at least doubled up for the two hour ascent. The passenger "specials" were each pulled by three mules.

Anenous Pass to Klipfontein. Ten of these Kitson "mountain" type locomotives which were introduced and operated from the Port up in the 1880's the special powerful Kitson "mountain" engines were used in all, the last being put into commission in 1907. From 1893 steam was used over the whole length of the line for goods traffic, however passenger traffic continued to be drawn by mules until 1896.
6. My report:

1. Introduction:

Aukotwa, Syferfontein, Robbebaai and now Port Nolloth. From Nama origin till today. I was always puzzled by the railway running through town, since I never saw any trains. In this report I would like to entertain the curiosity within us. I will reveal the secrets of the past, which shaped our region. I focused on transport and the specific effect it had on our region.

2. Background:

In the early days in Namaqualand, sea transport was one of the most efficient and speedy means of getting around. It was proved in 1855 when two men travelled from Cape Town to Leliefontein. One travelled by ox wagon and the other by boat to Hondeklip Bay and from there by horse to Leliefontein. The latter in Leliefontein a few days before the ox wagon arrived. Thus, when the copper miners of Namaqualand wanted to export their product, the logical route was to take it to a suitable point on the coast, for shipment overseas for refining.

3. Water transportation:

The Gariep River is Namaqualand’s only long distance perennial river and thus the only possible internal water transportation route. It forms the northern boundary of the region and enters the Atlantic Ocean near Alexander Bay. Originally it was known as the Eyn to the Khoi, but today we refer to it as the Orange River. However, many still refer to it to this day as the Gariep River.

When Captain James Alexander was sent to prospect in South Africa by the Royal Geographical Society. On travelling through the Richtersveld he found sites with a rich deposit of copper and started working mines, Numees and at Kodas. He transported his ore by ox-wagon to the Orange River, and he then floated it down on barges to Alexander Bay. The ore was loaded on their boat, the "Enterprise".

Captain James petitioned the Government to construct a tramway from Alexander Bay, across the sand desert to the Kodas mining area. The petition was not granted, and therefore they continued to transport ore down the river. This they apparently did until at least 1857, shortly before the company ceased operating in the area.

4. The coast:

It was no good getting copper ore to the coast unless it could be loaded aboard a vessel. Between Port Nolloth and the Orange River mouth there were no harbours. Although there were a few small headlands which give some slight protection in good weather, small boats were able to land.

However, the skipper would have to be continually on the alert and prepared to up anchor and clear the coast should the weather break. Landing could generally only be done, without fear of damaging the boat, on the rare sandy beaches or on rock shelves behind the reefs. It was a rather unattractive coast from which to supply traders or export copper ore.
3. Our school:
Our school motto is in Nama and means: The light of day. We are about 340 learners and 11 teachers. Due to our size, our subject choices are limited. Our academic record is excellent, but we still have to work harder to achieve the 100% pass rate. This is a collective aim - which we hope to achieve this year.

We have different sport and cultural activities at school. Not with standing our size, our school has set itself as a powerhouse in the Northern Cape when it comes to sport: producing several provincial representatives in various sport codes, yearly.

4. Introducing my project:
I chose to do a study on Transportation in Namaqualand.
I chose this topic, because when we were asked by my teacher to investigate the cemetery, I came across the railway tracks.
I was really puzzled by this, because never did I imagine trains in Port Nolloth.
I started my assignment discussing what I had seen with my grandfather - a person who actually were involved with the trains.

5. The process I used:
Step 1
I arranged interviews, attended, transcribed the interview and wrote a composition on the information I received.

Step 2
Revisited respondents about uncertain information or more information and added the new information.

Step 3
Took my report to be proof read by three different teachers, several times.

Step 4
Asked for approval to use the information, thanked respondents for their time and participation.
Geagte Heer/Dame

Toestemmingsbrief: om onderhoud.

Soos telefonies met u bespreek, sal bogenoemde skool twee verteenwoordigers na u stuur vir die afgespreekde onderhoud.

Plek ............................................

Tyd ............................................

Datum ........................................

Handtekening van respondent: ........................................

Byvoorbaat dank.

Die uwe

A. Thomas
Opvoeder
1. About myself:
My name is Juan Smith and I am 16 years old. I love playing chess. I am a grade 10 learner at Port Nolloth High School and my favourite subject is English. I want to become a Forensic Analyst. My research was done in Afrikaans my home language, but my presentation and report will be in English.

2. Our town:
I live in Port Nolloth, a small town, situated in the north-western corner of South Africa. We are less than 90 km’s from the Namibian border. Port Nolloth is the biggest town and the administrative headquarters of the Richtersveld municipality. Traditionally we are a fishing community.
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Hiermee gee ek, Theresa van Baalen, toestemming; dat inligting soos deur my verskaf - deur bogenoemde skool vir opvoedkundige doeleindes gebruik mag word.

Handtekening van respondent: [Signature]

Byvoorbaat dank.

Die uwe

[Signature]
A. Thomas
Opvoeder
Theresa Van Baalen

Geagte Heer/Dame

Toestemmingsbrief: om onderhoud.

Soos telefonies met u bespreek, sal bogenoemde skool twee verteenwoordigers na u stuur vir die afgespreekde onderhoud.

Plek: Museum

Tyd: 11 400

Datum: 24 Augustus 2011

Handtekening van respondent: ............................................................

Byvoorbaat dank.

Die uwe

A. Thomas
Opvoeder
Onderhoud met Gerhardus Mostert: Transkripsie

MEISIE Watweet u van Port Nolloth se geskiedenis?

OUPA Ek is gebore op 31 Augustus 1947, gedoop Gerhardus Martinus Wessel Mostert. Dit wat ek vir jou sé is redelik betroubaar en gedeeltelik is hoorsê.

MEISIE Hoeveelstasies is daarwatu van weet?

OUPA 2Myl regoor Mac Dougalsbaai se afdraai, 5myl onder Julieshoog, 8myl in 'n oostelikering oorkonde Julieshoog, 15myl op die hedendaagse Lekkerling pad as jytussen die berge in beweeg, 23myl boere se naam, Furgasen, 43 myl onderaan die Anenoës, terselfdertyd die Honeymoon hotel en bo-aandie Anenoës en verder is ekniebewus van nostalgiesnie.

MEISIE Watweet u van Port Nolloth se vorige name?

OUPA Port Nolloth het 2 benaminge gehad:
- Robbaai
- Aukwatua (iets van Mac dougalsbaai)
Die eintlikenaamkom van Kaptein Nolloth, 'n seilskipkaptein wat die potensiaal van die hawe gesien het.

MEISIE Ken u enigewerkers watdalk op die trein of op die trein spoor gewerk het?

OUPA Ek het Nick Kotse se oupageken, Edie Mostert en die eenwatek van gehoor het was George Cockrell, wat die Steinkop Okieplyn gewerk het.

MEISIE Wat was die doel van die trein en die koper?

OUPA Die doel van die trein was om die koperna Port Nolloth toe te bring, daarwees geneanderordentlik toegangspadnie en van Port Nollothaf was die nodigevoorradeterugvervoerena Okiep, soosmasjienere, onderdele, voedsel dynamite en steenkool.
Gert Links (telefoon gesprek)

Met alle vrae wat aan my voorsien was, het ek ongelukkig net reaksie op die gedeelde van toepassing op die “oud” Richtersveld.

Die Eijn of Gariep rivier was gebruik vir die afvoer van koper vanaf Numees en Kodas. James Alexander was in 1836 gestuur om te kom prospektreer: tot in Walvisbaai. By Springbokfontein he thy op kopererts afgekom, maar was nie veel beïndruk nie. Tot sy kom in die Numees en Kodas area, waar hy toe begin myn hy. Hy verwys na 28 en 65% egte koper. Met ossewa na die rivier en vlotte af tot wát vandag Alexanderbaai is het hulle die koper vervoer. Daar was dit op die Enterprise gelaai en reguit Skotland toe.

Jammer daar is nie enige ander inligting waarmee ons can help nie.
Die 3 hoof probleme wat ewaar was deur die vervoer van koper oor die middel van 'n osse - wo ro die hawe was die volgende.

1. Die tejot om paai deur Hardewyld.
2. Die dwars wegbreek met hulle swaai, vraag deur die saige sandveld vir omtrent saam en
3. Die teot oor water en los vir die dwars, veroor in die somer maande.

Toe die uitvoer van koper oor 1000 ton per jaar gestuig het en water was boe eenduisende, daarom het hulle besluit om dit verder te gebruik. Nog in stoom trein was betreklik beskerm, maar ongelukkig het hierdie klei en jins baie mechaniese probleme en die myl was gebruik oor die hele lengte van die trein spoor. In die oë van myl transaksies was 70 tot 80 myl gebruik om die gewone trein te leer, was in 3½ gebou met 6 myl wat die trek. In die 1870's is die spesiale krachtige kisson "beg"-type trein wat betreklik beskerm en bestuur van die hawe op Anzie- nes pas no Eflantien toe. Van die enjins was in geheel gebruik en die laasste was in 1894 gebruik. Van 1893 was stoom oor die hele lengte van die lyn gebruik om geodere te vervoer. Aanvank en passasier morgsteeds deur myl getrok tot omtrent 1896.
Die Garies Rivier is Namakwa Land se enigste verhoubare rivier wat deur die jaar vloei en is dus die enigste water vervoer roete.

Oorspronklik was dit deur die Ke khot as die Eyen gete, maar Vandaag verwyys ons na dit as die Oranje Rivier, hoewel barre mense dit vandaag na verwyys as die Garies rivier. In 1831 was Kaptein James Alexander gestuur om die binneeland te bekleen in Suid-Afrika deur die Komitee Geografiese Vereniging. Op sy pad deur die Richtersveld het hy afgekoms op plekke wat hy in die Koper, sowat 24% en 64% rijk aan koper. Hê het ooreenkom met die myne van Numees en Kadas begin werk. Hy het sy ets deur middel van 'n osse-wo ro'de die Oranje Rivier vervoer, hy het dit dan op vloete gelas en dit dan na Alexanderbadie vervoer. Die ets was dan op botte gelas.

Kaptein James het die reëling versek om 'n Spoorweg te bou op die sagte sand veld na die Kadas myn area. Die versoeke was afgekree, daarom het hy hul besluit om die ets nogsteeds met die Oranje Rivier af te stuur.

Dit sou nie boot om koper ets by die kus te ky kersy dit tot daar vervoer kon word. Tussen 'n en die delfmond was daar geen hawe nie. Alhoewel daar naas dié landings plekke was wat gedetailleer bestem was teen die elemente van die see, tydens goeie weer kon klein stepe land. Landings kon eintlik net gedoen word sonder vrees om die boot te bestadig teen die sagte strand of teen die rotse. Dit was (hoo)n redeslike en nuttige kus om koper uit te voer.
Me. Theresa van Baalen
Port Nolloth Museum

Geagte Dame

**Navorsings inligting:**

Soos reeds met u bespreek, versoek ons dat u Juan Smith sal help met die nodige inligting vir haar navorsing. Sy doen navorsing oor die ontwikkeling van vervoer in Namakwaland.

Enige inligting sal welkom wees en waarder word.

Byvoorbaat dank.

Die uwe

A. Thomas
Opvoeder