

The historic Garub 1 waterhole upgrade

The railway between Aus and Luderitz was constructed to carry water inland for the ox wagon route between Luderitz and Keetmanshoop - an arduous journey, costing the lives of men and animals due to scarcity of water. Ships carried up to 750 000 gallons of water from the Cape, plus 4000 horses (ancestors of our Namib's) and tons of fodder and supplies to Luderitz from where it was transported inland.

One description of crossing this terrain goes: "The long treks across this God-forsaken country are like a hideous nightmare...The country now is simply rock and sand, rock and sand...A few horses give in occasionally..." It was the lack of water which hampered these campaigns through what became known as the 'thirst-land'.

Thus came about the historic Garub train station (built in 1906) to provide the transport locomotives with water. During the war years (1914/15) much of that railway and station building was destroyed by the fleeing German troops with the Union soldiers in slow pursuit, having to repair the line as they went.

Apparently a cloud of dust perpetually hung over the Garub waterhole where 10 000 soldiers and 6 000 animals gathered to drink. To relieve the pressure on the water supply, a narrow-gauge railway was built to several boreholes to supply the trains. One of these historic boreholes still exists today as a resource for the ancestors of those horses and for other animals which inhabit this area.

Garub 1 is now in urgently need of a complete rebuild. This will relieve pressure on Garub 2 (the current lookout waterhole) also there will be less travelling distance for oryx when grazing is good in the western side of the park.

The Foundation will advise everyone on estimated costs as soon as engineers have examined the proposed pan and estimates have been obtained. We thank you in advance for your interest in the work Namibia Wild Horses Foundation does.