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הרכבת

A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East
Edited and Published by Rabbi Dr. Walter Rothschild PhD
Passauer Strasse 4, D-10789 Berlin, Germany
e.mail:Rothschild-Berlin@t-online.de



A train for the Rehovot line enters Lod station on 7th. May - in the background the extensive depot sidings and empty stock. (Photo: Walter Rothschild.)

101.02:

EDITORIAL.

Sometimes there is just too much News..... The Editor managed another (all-too-brief) Israel visit in May and thanks to support from friends managed to see an enormous amount of construction progress on new lines, and the restoration works under way or completed at the old stations in Jaffa, Jerusalem and Beer-Sheba. When one considers that in Jordan or Syria there is apparently almost nothing to report – thanks to civil wars, floods of refugees, political instability, collapse of tourism - the days of relatively-relaxed tours of the Hedjaz Railway are gone for now if not for ever – then this is the explanation why this issue focusses more on Israel and current events than usual. Still, there seems to be a slight revival of plans in Libya.... and we do have a brief report from Jordan. We DO have historical articles and other material on file, but it is hard to maintain balance within the space available. On the other hand, we do have many more pictures of earthworks – fascinating if you know the place and project, otherwise a bit 'same-ey.'

Issue 100 received some very encouraging praise and press notice. Now we work towards 200!

The Editor.

101.03.



A strange chain-driven contraption raises the dust as it propels two Slovak-registered bogie ballast hoppers, engaged on ballasting the new railway to Sderot and beyond on 7th. May 2013. (Photo: Walter Rothschild.).

101.04.

NEWS FROM THE LINE.

(i). OFAKIM.

From a press release of 03.03.2013 by the Transport, National Infrastructures & Roads' Safety Ministry:

'Further to the tender published recently for building the Ofakim passenger railway station, here are some details: the \$16 Million station will include a modern passenger terminal, platforms, a pedestrian subway to connect between the platforms, three tracks with an option for a future fourth one, parking facilities, easy access to public transport, traffic circles, and bicycle lanes.

Minister Katz said that the Ofakim station is an integral part of the \$540 million, 60 km line between Ashkelon and Beer-Sheba; the journey time between the two cities upon line completion will be 42 minutes, and four trains each direction will be operated. (Presumably this means 'hourly'!)

The line includes two additional stations at Shderot and at Netivot, as well as

fifteen railway bridges, three road bridges, four grade separations, eleven agricultural passages, and 48 culverts. The opening of Ofakim station is to be followed by opening of the other two stations even before completion of the whole line, in order to connect the periphery with the centre.

(ii). EILAT LINE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Several items here on this topic:

(a). Greenlight for Beersheba-Eilat railway. By Sharon Udasin, 6th. March 2013 The National Council for Planning and Building approved plans on Tuesday to build a 260-kilometre railway stretching from Beersheba to Eilat.

The decision came after the Southern District Committee for Planning and Building approved the final and most controversial portion of the railway – the route from Dimona to Hatzeva – in mid-

February, which followed previous approvals of the Beersheba - Dimona and Hatzeva - Eilat sections. Carrying out the entire project will be the national roads company, Netivei Israel – National Transport Infrastructure Company Ltd.

The Eilat railway will include a 240-km. passenger route and a 260-km. freight route, travelling at speeds of between 220 kph and 260 kph, according to the Transportation Ministry. In addition to including eight operational stations and four

cargo terminals, the new rail line will have five new passenger stations – at Dimona, Sapir, Ketura, Ramon and Eilat, the ministry said.

Environmental groups had particularly opposed plans for the Dimona - Hatzeva stretch, saying it was potentially destructive to nature that had thrived since the biblical era. The Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) had therefore come up with an alternative that would shift this 60-km. section southwest and include tunnels to minimize surface impact.

The district committee, however, favoured the original plans of Netivei Israel and the Transportation Ministry as much more cost-effective, stressing that the tun-

nel option would also risk obstruction and reduce operational capacity. Transportation Minister Israel Katz welcomed the council's decision to approve the project, noting that the plans would bring the periphery much closer to the Centre of the country.

The project will be one of strategic national importance, and will also allow for the passage of goods from Asia to Israel via the Red Sea, and then on to Europe, the minister said. "The project will be a blessing to factories in the South, and will be a large and significant ingredient in Israeli export in the Negev and the Arava, and in tourism in Eilat and the South," he said. The railway will also significantly reduce air pollution by reducing the need for polluting trucks, and will directly contribute to the lives of the 700,000 people living in the South, he added.

In response to the council's decision, the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) warned that the plans posed a serious threat to nature. "Unfortunately they sell us high-speed passenger trains in attractive packaging, but in practice, this is a destructive mega-project, which will transform the Negev and the Arava and all the natural assets and scenery unique to them into fields of infrastructure, while abandoning the Gulf of Eilat," an SPNI statement said. " <http://www.jpost.com/Sci-Tech/Article.aspx?id=305451>

This from 'Railway Gazette': <http://www.railwaygazette.com/news/projects-infrastructure/single-view/view/eilat-alignment-approved.html>

The National Council for Planning & Construction approved the full 260 km alignment for the proposed Eilat line on March 5, enabling detailed design to begin and costs and timescales to be finalised. This followed the Southern District Committee for Planning & Building's approval for the Dimona – Hatzeva section, which had attracted criticism from environmental campaigners.

The double-track electrified route from Be'er Sheva' will have stations at Dimona, Sapir, Ketura, Ramon and Eilat, and four freight terminals.

Part of the route will have separate alignments for passenger and freight services, with the passenger line being around 20 km shorter at 240 km. The chosen route includes 9 km of tunnel; a more expensive proposal for a longer route would have required 26 km of tunnelling.

Transport Minister Yisrael Katz has said he plans a bond issue to fund construction.'

(iii). CARMIEL LINE PROBLEMS.

In the first week of March, two Chinese workers of CCECC were injured during tunnelling works on the Acre-Carmiel line (Lower Galilee) currently under construc-

tion. The accident was probably caused by a collapse of a wall. The sub-contractors implementing the works are Dania Sibus and CCECC. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry stopped works on all the four tunnel portals until checking the safety plan for explosions.

(iv). MINISTER REAPPOINTED:

Good news for the railways: From a press release of 18.03.2013 by the Transport, National Infrastructures & Roads' Safety Ministry:

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Mr. Yisrael Katz at 01:30 and announced that he was to be re-appointed as the Transport, National Infrastructures & Roads' Safety Minister.

Minister Katz (this is now certain...) said that "This is an expression of trust in his activity to promote the transportation revolution taking place during the last four years in which he has been in his post; currently transportation initiatives in excess of more than \$25 Billion are being promoted with the aim of creating within few years an advanced, safe, and environmentally friendly transportation network - in which the railways play an important role - that will offer the public a real alternative, both urban and intercity, to the private car."

(v). HI-TECH APPENINGS.

From a press release of 18.03.2013 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

'The railways – through the Moblin Company - have introduced a new application for smart phones, combining advanced journey planning with a variety of information, entertainment, and free time channels. The application is available for owners of I-Phones and Androids and will be available for downloading by - among others - QR at railway stations and through the Railways' website. The new application is a platform for creating a dialogue with the passengers, as well as improving travelling experience, so futuristic additional developments are foreseen.

The application includes, amongst other features:

A simple and easy useable timetable including journey planning and changing trains when needed; navigation within this function and selecting departure and destination stations can be done by rolling the station list or marking the stations on the railways' lines' map in the simplest and quickest way.

A smart alarm clock to awake passengers 1 km prior to arrival at the destined station, by pleasant music and gentle vibration based on the railways' lines' map.

Railways news and updates.

Link to implement "Personal Rails" in the railways' FaceBook enabling the passengers to find friends for the journey according to personal preference and the appro-

prate information in the FaceBook; it may help, for example, to find partners for a car pool to/from the station or for conversation during the journey. Fares' calculator.'

(vi). STATISTICS AND IMPROVEMENTS.

The railways have announced that during 2012, over 40 million passengers were carried; over 400 trains are running daily serving 53 passenger stations. The most popular lines are Tel-Aviv - Haifa with 28,000 passengers/day, and Tel-Aviv - Ashkelon with 26,000 passengers/day.

Parallel to building lines and stations as well as purchasing rolling stock and motive power, the railways are actively improving the journey experience to make it more friendly and economical; thus a wireless internet free of charge has been introduced at stations, smart electronic boards for showing arrivals/departures in real time, a smart card, carrying bicycles on trains, upgrading stations' sites, etc.

(vii). PASSOVER TIMETABLE CHANGES.

The following changes in timetable were to take place due to Passover Holidays:

On Holidays' Eves trains will operate as on Fridays; there will be an additional train from Beer-Sheba Central to Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central at 08:45.

On the Holidays' conclusion, trains will operate as on Saturdays' conclusions; additionally, the 21:09 train from Haifa Central-The 8 to Jerusalem Malkha station will start at Kiryat-Motzkina at 20:52.

On Sunday, 24.03.2013, the 15:09 train from Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central, will start at Haifa-Central-The-8 at 14:12. The 16:12 train from Haifa Central-The 8 will start at Acre at 15:50. The 12:44 train from Beer-Sheba Central will terminate at Acre at 15:17.

On Wednesday and Thursday, 27.03.2013 and 28.03.2013, the following additional trains were operated:

- On the Binyamina - Ashkelon line: trains will depart from Binyamina at 11:58 and 13:58; and from Ashkelon at 10:28 and 12:28 respectively.

- On the Haifa - Modi'in line: at 10:18 from Haifa Central-The 8 to Modi'in Central, and from Modi'in Central to Haifa Central-The 8 at 10:03.

- On the Tel-Aviv - Jerusalem line: the trains departing from Tel-Aviv-Savidor-Central at 09:53, 11:53, 13:53, and 15:53, will terminate at Jerusalem Malkha instead of Beit-Shemesh.

- The 11:09, 13:09, 15:09, and 17:09 services to Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central, will start at Jerusalem Malkha station instead of Beit-Shemesh.

On Friday 29.03.2013, with the

introduction of summer time, there will be an additional train departing at 08:45 from Beer-Sheba Central station to Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central station.

(viii). TRAVEL FUN FOR KIDS.

Between 18.03.2013 and 20.03.2013, the railways are providing travelling children with a lot of activities, such as actors telling stories, painting copybooks, children books, model railway cars for assembly, etc.

These will take place on following trains:

The 09:02 train from Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central to Rehovot.

The 09:22 train from Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central to Haifa Hof-Hacarmel.

The 09:38 train from Rehovot to Binyamina.

The 10:22 train from Haifa Hof-Hacarmel to Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central.

The 11:09 train from Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central to Beer-Sheba Central.

The 11:12 train from Binyamina to Modi'in Central.

The 12:42 train from Modi'in Central to Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central.

The 12:44 train from Beer-Sheba Central to Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central.

(ix). SHOW TICKET DISCOUNTS.

Passengers wishing to enjoy the shows of the Israeli ensemble Machina at Shuni amphitheatre (near Binyamina station) on 28.03.2013, and at Nokia hall of Tel-Aviv on 04.04.2013, and using rail services, enjoyed tickets at a special reduced price.

(x). IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU FIND.

According to the 'Times of Israel' archaeologists engaged in an emergency dig along the route of a railway line 'somewhere in Northern Israel' near the Ahihud Junction came across a 9,000-year old Phallus. One assumes the original owner no longer needs it. In England some workmen's trains to depots were called 'Dido's (from 'Day In, Day Out') but as far as I know none was ever called a 'Dildo'.

(xi). JERUSALEM LINE: TUNNEL VISION.

Sybil Ehrlich had a great day out on the Jerusalem line and wrote the following: (*see photos on page 9 and back cover.*

'On Independence Day, April 16, Israel Railways organized an open day at one of the tunnelling sites for the high-speed railway from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The first I heard of it was a radio announcement on the morning of April 11, "details and registration on the Israel Railways website". Naturally I rushed to the website. It was in hourly time slots, pick a time. I was unable to pick a time (from my home computer), so I tried again when I got to work. By then the website was showing "all tickets gone".

I called the IR spokesman's office and asked if it would be possible to go as a journalist; the woman I spoke to said No problem, just turn up whenever I liked.

There was transport laid on from Pa'atey Modi'in station. Of course that station is a real pain to get to from Beit Shemesh; so close but it means going in to Tel Aviv and out again. But on the plus side, I now have (for my collection) a ticket from Beit Shemesh to Pa'atey Modi'in; it's not every day I have a chance to get one of those.

A bus was waiting outside Pa'atey Modi'in. There was a steward on board giving a running commentary, suited to kids, and off we went to a big open field just south of the settlement of Mevo Horon. Names were checked at the entrance, and tickets issued for the specific time slot that they had booked, but I waved my magic press card. The field was full of funfair items (giant inflatables, clowns, etc., and also a small model railway which I didn't really study). "Tour No. 18 going in now!" So I joined them, and entered a large tent where we were shown a high-speed film presentation of how wonderful it will all be when it's up and running. That lasted about three minutes, then it was out of the tent and onto the buses for the visit to the tunnel. It was a matter of chance whether the next vehicle out was an ordinary tourist bus or an open truck with transverse benches of the type used for desert tours. No picking and choosing allowed, just get on the next one. It was a normal tourist bus.

We drove on a dirt road to the site, which is just north of the Sha'ar Hagai interchange (not where I thought we would be going, and I have satisfied my curiosity as to what all that work is there that I see every day from the bus on my way to work! I thought it might be for road widening). The bus went through one of the tunnels, 1,200 metres long, and out at the other end, where we got off and had a few minutes to walk around. I saw quite a lot of narrow-gauge works track and two little works trains (not working of course, just parked there). There was also an opportunity to stand on a very long bridge and admire the view. Then it was all aboard the next bus out, which this time was an open truck, much better for photography! It was of course full of shrieking kids, but I made sure I was at the end of a bench. Another steward, life and soul of the party. What with him and his microphone, and the shrieking kids, my ears were really suffering! It was a bit frustrating, being so close to home but with no "escape route" – no possibility of getting out of the site and making one's own way to wherever one wanted to go.

We arrived back at the funfair field, where there was a bus waiting to take passengers back to Pa'atey Modi'in. I intended to ask the driver if I could be

dropped off at Modi'in itself (there is a bus from Modi'in to Beit Shemesh at 13:45, one of only about four buses a day, which would have been fantastically convenient), but I could see he was an obnoxious type and in answer to someone else's question he grunted rather rudely that he was only going to Pa'atey Modi'in, no stops anywhere else. I arrived at Pa'atey Modi'in just in time to miss the train that would have got me to Modi'in Merkaz in time for that bus, so instead I bought a ticket to Tel Aviv and took a bus home from there, quicker than going back to Beit Shemesh by train.

All in all it was a successful event. For probably 99 per cent of the participants – families with young children – it was a nice day out and they would have been equally happy at one of the many other sites open to visitors for Yom Ha'atzmaut. For the more discerning, it was a great opportunity to see and photograph something really exciting!

Jeremy Topaz also wrote: 'Here is my account of the "Rakevet HaAtid" event.

'I first heard about it on March 13th, when I got a letter to the club web site from a firm called "Target Market", saying they were organizing the event and asking if we had a working model layout they could borrow. We do have, with a Perspex cover and a timer so it runs for a while and rests for a while.

As my wife and I have every year a party for our Dutch friends on Independence Day, I thought I would be unable to go, much to my regret. But when I got from them a timetable saying the last tour would be at 17:00, I thought I might make it if our guests didn't tarry too late. The day before, the driver came to get the model, and I drove after him to the site, arriving at 15:30. I placed the board on the table in the open air in the field, and waited for electricity to see if it ran OK. By 16:30, I had to leave, no electricity. I left instruction to the driver who brought it how to adjust the speed. There was a diesel loco and 5 small freight wagons (passenger coaches gave problems on the curves). It turned out that 4 days earlier, they had discovered that David Footerman had a model, and that was located next to ours. He came to run it the whole day – a very nice layout.

On the day, our guests left by 16:00 and I set off (it is only 25 minutes by car). I found that a tour was just about to leave, No. 42. I saw the movie whiz by like Sybil, then got on the bus. We had a very good Madricha, a girl from IR who knew her stuff, willingly answered questions and spoke clearly – a rarity among such people. The wide dirt track was apparently built to provide access to the tunnel(s) work area. There are three tunnels there with short open air gaps between them, in the case of the last two a short bridge. We first drove to the plant where the concrete lining sec-

tors are made. There will be 200,000 altogether – 100,000 on each track. Huge numbers of them are stacked up outside the factory. Opposite, you see the stone conveyor, which, unlike the ones I know, e.g. at the Dead Sea Works, did not have a continuous belt going back under the top, active side, but only the top. I asked the girl, who said the belt come out of the TBM and is added to there, bits being cut off at the far end and returned to the TBM.

Then we drove through the tunnel, 1.26km long. All along, they had coloured fluorescent lights flashing, loud music playing, just like a disco. There were even a couple of laser projectors, one displaying "Rakevet Yisrael" and one drawing flowers on the tunnel wall. At the end, at the bridge, we got off the bus and, in front of the entrances to the next pair of tunnels, a movie screen showed how the TBM's work, pushing a couple of metres and then placing the concrete lining sectors with hydraulic rams. Then we crossed the bridge, over a narrow but dramatic gorge, got on the bus and went back. On the way we passed several of the open lorries with benches – the tunnel is 10 m. diameter. I don't think two regular buses can pass.

When I got back to the site, it turned out that our loco was running alone, without wagons. The guy had set it too fast, they kept derailing and David Footerman had taken them off. His layout is beautiful, no bigger than ours, but he had several trains running at once. His is Märklin. I said it was so good, ours was not needed, but he said the kids loved to be able to start the loco running on ours themselves – his was under his control the whole time. Still, I wish we could have had someone there to look after ours. Just before I left, at 18:30, the last tour, No. 47 was called out. There were still hundreds of cars in the parking lot (a field). So much for scaring me into thinking I might miss it, at 17:00! Israeli misinformation, as usual. In spite of that, I think the project itself is being done very professionally – unusual for our crazy country. I even begin to believe in the 2017 starting date. Might actually happen.'

See also this 10-minute video clip:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFGDQStDPQc&feature=em-share_video_user

(xii). NEW SPRING TIMETABLE:

From a press release of 03.04.2013 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The railways continue with their improvements; In the new spring timetable to be introduced on Saturday night, 06.04.2013, more trains, better frequencies, extended services, and longer services on Fridays and Saturday nights are included.

The railways' General Manager Mr. Boaz Zafirir said: "During 2012 the railways introduced the PIS system providing real time information regarding train

movements, a pilot wireless internet has been introduced at railway stations and on trains, combined multi-liner rail/bus smart card with significant fare reductions, facilities for carrying bicycles on trains, and more recently an advanced application for smart phones. The new time table reflects the availability of more trains for more passengers".

Full details regarding the new timetable are available at the website (www.rail.co.il) and at the official face book; journey planning was already updated for the 06.04.2013.

The main changes on the new spring timetable:

1. Extended hours of operation on Fridays closer to beginning of Sabbath.
2. Earlier start of operation on Saturday nights, closer to conclusion of Sabbath.
3. On the Tel-Aviv - Beer-Sheba line, 4 additional night trains (2 in each direction) between 22:41 and 00:41; the night trains will call also at Lehavim-Rahat station which will start operating 24 hours/day.
4. On the Yavne-West – Tel-Aviv - Hod-Ha-Sharon line: trains currently operated two per hour, covering the Yavne-West - Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central section in 36 minutes, timing will now be cut to 34 minutes for one train calling at all intermediate stations, and to 30 minutes for the second train not calling at Holon Junction and Holon Yo-seftal; these stations will in any case have 2 trains/hour due to the fact that between Rishon-Le-Zion West and Tel-Aviv, 3 trains/hour are operated; train activity, currently terminating between 21:00 and 22:00, will be extended by 2 hours.
5. On the Haifa - Kiryat-Motzkim line: an additional train at morning rush hours between 08:00 and 09:00 bringing it to 4 trains/hour in both directions; also operating 2 pairs of new trains in both directions between Haifa-Hof-Ha-Carmel – Kiryat-Motzkim - Acre in the afternoon rush hours between 16:00 and 19:00.
6. On the Rishon-Le-Zion Rishonim – Beer-Jacob - Lod Ganei-Aviv - Tel-Aviv line: all the trains which so far terminated at Tel-Aviv Hahagana station will now call also at Tel-Aviv Hashalom station and terminate at Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central station.
7. A daily additional train from Netanya to Tel-Aviv at 07:31.
8. Additional coaches for trains operating on the rebuilt Tel-Aviv – Beit-Shemesh - Jerusalem line which has recently enjoyed a surprising rise in passenger traffic.

(xiii). INDEPENDENCE DAY TIMETABLE:

The railways announced that on 15.04.2013, the National Memorial Day for soldiers who fell during the wars, and on 16.04.2013, Independence Day, trains would be operated to a special timetable according to the various public needs.

(xiv). CONFLICT OVER RAILWAY BUDGETS.

Transport, National Infrastructures & Roads' Safety Minister Mr. Yisrael Katz held an aggressive press conference in which he sharply criticized the intention of the newly-elected Finance Minister Mr. Yair Lapid and his assistants to cut the Infrastructures' budget - particularly for Rail, describing them as poor, shortsighted, and egocentric clerks who care only for the already developed Greater Tel-Aviv Area, while "not giving a damn about the periphery", who from the beginning were against the badly-needed investments. He also threatened to apply to the State Comptroller to check if the cancellations are legal. He explained that the planned cuts on lines already under construction, like the Acre - Carmiel and Haifa - Beit-Shean routes, will cause financial claims for compensations which may cost more than the savings.

The Finance Ministry's response was a stammered one; they said that projects like the Tel-Aviv LRV/METRO or new LRV lines in Jerusalem will not be affected; they added that there is no intention to cancel any of the projects, but only to delay them for several years, explaining that in any case these are projects to be implemented in stages. Both sides agreed, however, that the final decision will come from Prime Minister Netanyahu. Then - From a press release of 23.04.2013 by the Transport Ministry:

'Minister Katz announced today – 23.04.2013 – that his position, not to stop or to delay completion of the lines Acre - Carmiel, Haifa - Beit-Shean, and Ashkelon - Beer-Sheba currently under construction, has been accepted and thus these lines will be completed on time! Other projects, on which implementation did not yet commence, will be delayed for a year or two, while for additional projects, the Ministry and the railways will issue bonds. Minister Katz added that along all railway lines the real estate values have jumped significantly, and this will happen on the new lines too when completed.'

(xv). NEW TRAINING CENTRE AT LOD.

From a press release of 10.04.2013 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The railways opened on 09.04.2013 their new training centre adjacent to Lod railway station, which has become a hub for activities and will also include the railways' management building currently under construction. Built at a cost of \$2.7 Million, it is equipped with the most advanced technological aids hand-in-hand with new training programmes strictly planned especially for the railways' employees. The opening included invited guests who took part in the virtual activities of moving locos from one point to another, shunting, etc. Over the last years, many resources went into improving the level

of the employees' skills. A course for the railway's unique jobs such as signalman, shunting worker, refuelling worker, etc. costs \$41,000.00, while a basic course for a train driver lasting about 11 weeks costs \$55,600.00. The employees are undergoing three days of refreshment. The massive investment in training is unique, and intended to close the gap over many years in which there was little or no training. The railways are also currently purchasing simulators for drivers and signalmen. The railways have recently received new Euro 4000 locos, three track inspection cars, and will soon receive the first Euro 3200 locos. The new training centre replaces the former one located at the inadequate building of the disused Tel-Aviv South terminal station in the south-western outskirts of Tel-Aviv.

(xvi). DISABLED ACCESS.

The railways started in March 2013, in cooperation with the Transport Ministry, a pilot plan to make the whole passenger rolling stock accessible for disabled people using wheelchairs. The plan is experimentally running for three months, during which the time of applying to the station master prior to the journey to prepare the lift has been cut from 24 to 6 hours; the railways will do their best to assist the disabled even in cases without an early announcement.

(xvii). LOD SMART CARD.

On 01.04.2013 the railways started selling a multi-liner combined Rail/Bus smart card, whereby those citizens of Lod using it enjoy 20% reduced fares on the city's urban lines operated by Egged, Veolia, and Superbus, as well as unlimited travel on selected railway and bus lines.

(xviii). TRACK WORKS NEAR REHOVOT.

From an announcement of 18.04.2013 on the Israel Railways Ltd. website:

'The railways announced on 18.04.2013 that between Friday 19.04.2013 at 14:10 and Sunday, 24.04.2013, the line Rehovot - Yavne-East would be closed to traffic due to infrastructure works. Consequently, all the trains between Binyamina and Ashkelon would start/terminate at Rehovot station. The railway authorities would provide bus shuttle services between the two stations of the closed section.'

(xix): AYALON WORKS.

Due to infrastructure works to be carried out by The Israeli Electrical Company Ltd. on Ayalon Highway No. 20 (in the median of which the Tel-Aviv North-South rail line runs), trains will not operate on Monday 20.05.2013 between 05:00 and 22:00 between Tel-Aviv Hahagana and Savidor-Central stations. Consequently, trains from

the south will terminate at HaHagana station. Trains from the north will terminate at Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central station. Additionally, the trains departing from Beer-Sheba Central station from 23:30 onward will terminate at Ben-Gurion International Airport station. The railways will provide bus shuttle services between the two stations.

(xx). S.P.A.D. (SIGNAL PASSED AT DANGER).

Another 'severe Safety Event' occurred on Friday, 10.05.2013, when the driver of a passenger train departing from Beer-Sheba Central station ignored the red light and continued until being fully braked by the Indusi system. The Transport Ministry blamed the railways' authorities in not reporting the event, even though they are committed to do so.

A source within the railways said that "Recently the safety level is deteriorating; When a train passes the red light, what happens next is just a matter of luck - in this case there was no other train on the same track, otherwise it could have ended differently!"

(xxi). STATISTICS.

From a press release of 22.05.2013 by Israel Railways Ltd.; passenger traffic figures for 2013 first quarter:

Between January and March 2013 – inclusive – 10,156,456 passengers were carried compared with 9,480,160 during the same 2012 period; 7% more.

Punctuality index reached 94.78%, compared with 92.11% in 2012 and 86.45% in 2011.

Punctuality index for peak traffic hours reached 94.77%, compared with 91.84% in 2012 and 84.91% in 2011.

During this quarter there was a significant rise in passenger traffic both on the new and the upgraded following lines:

Yavne-West - Tel-Aviv: 687,642 were carried – 36% more than in the same 2012 period; Yavne-West is currently the most southerly station of the suburban line Hod-Hasharon – Tel-Aviv – Holon – Bat-Yam - Rishon-Le-Zion West and Yavne West.

In the April 2013 published timetable, the journey time between Yavne and Tel-Aviv has been cut to 23 minutes; towards the end of 2013 this line will be linked to Ashdod and Ashkelon, and traffic is anticipated to grow further.

Tel-Aviv – Beit-Shemesh - Jerusalem: Though figures here are very modest, traffic has doubled itself to 3,500 passengers/day, mainly thanks to an 18 minutes shorter journey time between Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem, and 7 minutes between Tel-Aviv and Beit-Shemesh, achieved by upgrading the Ramla - Na-an Junction section which this line shares with the line to Beer-Sheba; also rolling stock has been increased.

Tel-Aviv - Beer-Sheba line: Traffic was up by 37%; in July 2012 the journey time was

shortened by 20 minutes to 55 minutes for fast trains; additionally, night trains started to call at Ben-Gurion International Airport station.

The railway finished 2012 with a net loss of around \$75 Million and an operational loss of around \$74 Million, according to the Governmental Companies' Authority; while the operational loss was down by 8.2%, the net loss was up by 8.5%.

2012 was finished with a positive cash flow of \$6.7 Million as against a negative cash flow of \$80 Million in 2011.

Rail Income was \$400 Million (+17.2%), of which \$166 Million came from Passengers (+9.0%) and \$38 Million came from Freight (1.1%).

Income from Subsidy was \$183 Million – 33% more than in 2011; passenger traffic rose by 12.4% to 40.4 Million; consequently, the subsidy for passenger per journey was \$4.53; +18.5%.

Minister Katz said that his office is promoting railway projects to the south and the north; the growing demand for rail services is a decisive proof of the need of further lines like to Carmiel, Beit-Shean, Shderot, Ofakim, and Netivot.

The railways' General Manager Mr. Boaz Zafrir said: "The first 2013 quarter shows that a managerial attention, a co-operation between all the company's workers, and investments in infrastructures are the bases for improving the company' activity, as well as attracting a new public; the railways will continue the efforts for service improvements, punctuality, and increased frequencies".

(xxii). JERUSALEM LINE IMPROVEMENTS.

The railways have announced service improvement between Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem in the evenings: Starting on Sunday, 09.06.2013, trains 530 & 532 departing from Jerusalem Malkha station at 20:28 and 21:28 will call at Lod Ganei-Aviv station at 21:37 and 22:37 respectively. Trains Nos. 537 & 539 departing from Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central station at 21:53 & 22:53 will call at Lod Ganei-Aviv station at 22:11 & 23:11 respectively.

(xxiii). ADVERTISING.

The railways' business development department published on 28.05.2013 an Outdoor Advertising Manifesto campaign to be carried out on all railway sites. The campaign is to start on 15.06.2013; there will be more than one campaign, each for up to 14 days.

(xxiv). VALLEY LINE PROGRESS.

From a press release of 02.06.2013 by the Transport, National Infrastructures & Roads' Safety Ministry: 'The Yizreel Valley rail project does not stop! Both the Ministry and Israel Roads' Company Ltd. pub-

lished on Sunday, 02.06.2013 the tender for building the Afula East station to be located more or less on the midway point between Haifa and Beit-Shean (near the Jordanian border). Publishing the tender has been enabled after Minister Katz succeeded in preventing a “freezing” of the Valley project due to the national budget cut. The station is planned for opening during 2015.

Minister Katz said: “Linking cities like Afula and Beit-Shean with the railways network will significantly cut the travel time to the centre of Israel and raise the value of real estate located along the alignment; we speak about a real revolution which will also increase employment and living possibilities of the population”. Both Minister Katz and Israel Roads’ Company General Manager Mr. Shay Baras emphasized the line importance to be used for freight traffic too; it will enable shorter hauls to/from the port of Haifa and reduce air pollution as well as traffic jams on roads.



Concrete bed

(xxv). **Progress on the Renewed “Valley Line”**

Jeremy Topaz writes: ‘The renewal of the “Valley Line” between Haifa and Beth Shean is really taking off. On May 18th, a special event was held at the Kfar Yehoshua museum, located in the disused station which once served the Hedjaz railway branch to Haifa along the Jezreel Valley, known in Israel as “Rakevet Ha-Emek” – the Valley Railway. The event, under the title “Valley Railway – Old versus New” included not only a visit to the museum, with displays of photos and items from the original line and posters describing the plans for the new railway, but a visit to a work site on the new alignment. This was reached by driving in a procession along a few hundred metres of bumpy dirt track.

The new line diverges south from the old route before Kfar Yehoshua, because an Air Force base was built on the original line. Further east, it curves northwards to circle around Afula, rather than going right through the middle of that town as the old line did.

Several bridges and sections of embankment are in advanced stages of completion. At the site we visited, a concrete bed had been laid down over a 300m length, as drainage problems there preclude laying ballast directly on the earth. At present only a single track is being prepared, but I was assured that the infrastructure will allow for future double-tracking.’

On the map, I showed the original line, where the new one differs, as a dotted blue line.



All photos Jeremy Topaz

Single line block



Late News
 From 1st July to 31st August there will be a model railway display and layout at the Old Jerusalem Station - a FIRST for Israel!



Kfar Y Strn



Embankment

רכבת העמק יצאה לדרכה




זמן נסיעה

59 דקות של נסיעה ופרידו בין בית שאן ללב המפרץ עם נסיעה בכל התחנות. נסיעה עם נסיעה אחת בלבד. בתחנה עפולה יגיע זמן הנסיעה ל-41 דקות.

160 קמ"ש

תואי הנסיעה של הרכבת כולל עיקולים, עליות וירידות, תוכנן במידע לאפשר לה להגיע למהירות נסיעה של 160 קמ"ש.

נוע תנוע

תאריך היעד להפעלת רכבת העמק החדשה, מחיפה לבית שאן, נקבע לתחילת 2016.

גשרים

הקמת הפרדות מפלסיות בין כביש למסילה ובניית מעברים חקלאיים תחתיים ועיליים (כבישים 649, 722, 669, 675, 60, 85).

8 תחנות

בשלב זה יוקמו בפועל חמש תחנות לאורך של מסילת הרכבת. לב המפרץ, מורח, כפר יחזקיהו, כפר בתוך, עפולה ובית שאן. בשלב הבא יוקמו תחנות נוספות בנשר, אלרואי ותל יוסף.

אתגרים

טיפול בהענקת מאות טורים ונסיעת עשרות אלפי טורים הנעים בתאום השיתוף עם קק"ל לזכות טיפול בהענקת דו שלבית של נעים גדולים מורכבים בסיועו "הוחל" מאגר מים כדוגמת מאגר כפר יחזקיהו ומאגר דמת דוד, העתקת קווי ספקות קווי מתח גבוה ויצירת גשרים חדשים כדוגמת גשר הכבישים 6 ו-70 חקלאיות בשיתוף עם ישובי המסביבה לכל אורך הדרך. הקמת מערכות ניקוז תת קרקעיות בשיתוף הישובים והאגודות החקלאיות, סינון עופי עפר לאטמוספירה חקלאיים לצורך טיוב הקרקע.






Photos from Sybil Ehrlich on the Open Day on the Jerusalem line works.

Sections of tunnel wall (we were told there would be 100,000 of these altogether), photographed through bus window, on the way to the site



A works train, photographed "on dry land"

..more photos from Sybil Ehrlich



The other works train, photographed "on dry land"

See also back page



TENDERS.

The following tenders' latest dates for submission of proposals have been postponed:

(i). International tender No. EP/PQ/01/12: Electrification of the Israel Railways Network: to 11.04.2013. Then extended again on 02.06.2013 to Latest date: 13.06.2013.

(ii). **Tender No. BN/KB/04/12: Building the Ofakim passenger railway station: to 18.04.2013.**

(iii). Tender No. TK/KB01/13: Building and maintenance works of control and operational systems at Beer-Sheba Depot; latest date: 10.06.2013.

(iv). Tender No. TC/MT/03/13: Statutory Design Services and planning fees and levies planning services; latest date: 25.06.2013.

(v). **Tender No. TM/MT/17/12: Measuring Services for the railways; latest date: 20.06.2013.**

I.R. Tenders:

(i). **Tender No. MS/RC/2013/3:** Operating Taxi services to/from the Beer-Sheba University Station. The contract is for 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 11.04.2013.

(ii). **Tender No. MS/RC/2013/4:** Operating a 4500 sq.m. area at Haifa Bat-Galim (West) station for parking purposes only. The contract is for 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 11.04.2013.

(iii). **Tender No. BN/KB/04/12:** Building the Passenger Railway Station at Ofakim. Latest date for submission of proposals postponed to 18.04.2013

(iv). **Tender No. LG/SR/03/13:** Providing Garden Maintenance Services for the Railways' gardens. The contract is for 24 months with an optional extension of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 05.06.2013.

(v). **Tender No. CA/SR/06/13:** A framework agreement for providing Diagnosis and selecting services for the railways' Human Resources candidates. [I think this means 'People'! Ed.] The contract is for 24 months with an optional extension of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 03.06.2013.

(vi). **Tender No. TS/SR/04/13:** Providing NDT services for welding, rails and points. The contract is for 12 months with an optional extension of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 04.06.2013.

(vii). **Tender No. TC/MT/03/13:** A frame agreement for providing statutory planning and licensing consulting services and consulting services regarding Fees and Levies. The railways intend to select up to 3 bidders. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months.

(viii). **Tender No. TH/SR/26/12:** Providing maintenance services and/or supply and installation of mini-central Cooling and Ventilation systems at the railways' Control and Command Centres. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 13.06.2013.

National Roads Company Ltd. tender No. 07/13: Building Afula East station on the Valley Railway Line. The project includes: station building, tracks of 450 m long each, a control and command building on a 1200 m² area, a parking area for 690 private and public transport vehicles, and access roads. The station cost is currently estimated at \$22Mmillion. Implementation: 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.07.2013.

TENDERS ALLOCATED.

The Railways have published the names of winners for the following tenders:

The local company Koren Text Ltd. won Tender No. LG/SR/12/24 for translation services.

The local company Peter Pipe Industries Ltd. won tender No. MC/SR/12/20 for providing maintenance services in case of breakdown regarding refuelling and oil facilities at the railways' southern region.

The following local companies: Sa'ar Pro-Market Sales Promotion Agency Ltd. and S.Profit Marketing Ltd., won tender No. SO/MT/01/13 for the railways' sales promoting services.

The railways announced on 23.05.2013 that the company Top Line Communication Ltd. won tender No. MN/KB/04/12 for providing photography and documentation services of the A1 fast rail link to Jerusalem; the winner had reduced his initial offered quote by 50%.

LIGHT RAIL.

A. The Tel-Aviv METRO/LRV project:

(i). **From a press release of 10.03.2013 from NTA:**

During the night between Thursday 07.03.2013 and Friday 08.03.2013, NTA successfully completed one of its most complex operations carried out so far; casting the upper ceiling of Em-Hamoshavot shaft through which one of the TBM's will be brought in order to bore the 11 km tunnel of the Red Line. For 12 hours dozens of cement mixing trucks poured 2,000 tons of concrete into a depth of 8 metres in order to create the shaft upper ceiling; this has been done prior to casting the shaft floor, in order to avoid movements of the supporting walls and the nearby road No. 4.

Both Minister Katz and NTA General Manager Mr. Zukhman expressed their satisfaction at the completion of the first shaft, mentioning that it had been carried out without any disruption to traffic or the inhabitants.

In the next stage NTA will cast two additional ceilings to be followed by a floor at Em-Hamoshavot shaft at a depth of 25 metres; at the same time, the TBM will be brought inside through a special opening to be created in the ceiling. About 3 months from now, NTA will start casting a ceiling also at the Herzl shaft; this one will be even more complex, due to the fact that work is to be carried out by divers in full darkness in and under deep waters.

NTA is currently busy in the initial stage of selecting the international sub-contractor to carry out the boring by TBM as well as the "boxes", namely the underground station sites.

(ii). **From a press release of 01.06.2013 by NTA:**

Near the Tel-Aviv Herzl shaft of the Red Line, where NTA are now excavating the shaft for starting works of TBM on the 15m deep sub-surface tunnel, an exhibition on design of the line's stations was opened on Friday, 31.05.2013. In the exhibition named "A look into the bowels of the earth", 14 works of students from the Administration School's Internal Design Class, which reached the final stage, are exhibited.

The 14 works are characterized by an original, innovative, and creative concept regarding the futuristic look of the stations, such as a huge wheel for hanging bicycles, amphitheatre, beer bar, and a huge slide.

During the festive ceremony of opening the exhibition, with hundreds of participants, NTA people praised the young artists and hoped for a fruitful cooperation in the future too.

Architect Udi Lehrman – NTA Implementation Department Manager said: "Already 10 years have been spent investing a lot of effort in moving infrastructures at a cost of \$0.4 Billion, as well as in excavating shafts along the Red Line alignment; Unfortunately, most of the public is unaware of this; I hope that your creative works will help increasing the understanding that this complex project is really to be implemented. It is worth taking pictures here at the exhibition, because once the project has been completed no-one will even imagine that there was ever such an exhibition; I hope that the Red Line will be an integral part of the daily life of people in the Greater Tel-Aviv Metropolitan Area."

Professor Yossi Friedmann, Coordinator of the Final Project in the Administration School's Internal Design Class, said: "While NTA does the macro and

builds the LRV we, the students are focusing on micro, namely: the urban stations; we believe that each station to be built has to influence, integrate, and improve the community life quality; we've decided to focus on three stations: Shaul Hamelekh (King Shaul), Carlebach, and Yehuda Ha-Levi (Herzl shaft)". The exhibition will be open for the public until 13.06.2013 including.

NTA tender No. 053/2012: Supply, assimilation, and maintenance of EASY2COMPLY software module QA for QA management. Latest date for submission of proposals: 05.05.2013.

NTA tender No. 026/2013: Providing Geotechnical Consulting Services. Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.05.2013

NTA tender No. 2013/0033: Providing design and planning services for public transport. Latest date for submission of proposals: 07.07.2013.

B. JERUSALEM.

(i). **FESTIVALS.** The Transport, National Infrastructures & Roads' Safety Ministry, the Jerusalem Municipality and the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan Team announced on 12.03.2013 that during the Passover Holidays most of the city would be closed for private cars - apart from 3 'Kiss and Ride' parking areas - and public transport services would be intensified; in addition to intensive bus services, the LRV concessionaire CityPass announced that trains would be operated at 7-minute intervals for most of the day.

The ministry announced that on Monday 15.04.2013, the eve of the Independence Day, Night bus lines and the Jerusalem LRV would be operated between midnight and 04:00.

C. EILAT.

A new entry! Sybil wrote on 12.5.2013: 'I'm proof-reading an article for the "Metro" (Tel Aviv local) supplement of the Jerusalem Post that says the new Ramon International Airport at Timna "will include a light rail that will transport passengers to downtown Eilat."

101:07.

OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

A. SAUDI ARABIA.

A sad item in 'Today's Railways No. 206 (Feb. 2013) p. 54 refers to software problems on the Trenord system in northern Italy when many trains had to be cancelled – there were 'severe delays, disruption and cancellations; Several thousand commuters were stranded in stations, trains had no staff or rolling stock, whilst in one case five drivers turned up for the same train! From 10th. December... snowfall caused further complication...' The problems were with the GOAL System software used for managing staff rosters; but it is noted (and hence the relevance to 'Harakevet') that this software is already successfully in use on French, Lithuanian and Saudi Arabian state railways.... (where hopefully, in the latter, snowfall is not a major issue.)

B. EGYPT.

(i). TRIP ADVICE FOR ENTHUSIASTS.

In 'Eisenbahn Kurier' 3/2012 is an article by Johannes Glöckner concerning recent trips to the Egyptian National Railways. He combines advice for checking in advance for the latest security situation - and raises the issue of problems of photography. But there are a few surprises there too.

'On the West bank (of the Gulf of Suez) is the harbour city of Ain Sukhnah – a new line runs from here fifty kilometres to the north, to Suez. A container terminal, a new steelworks and a refinery are in this manner connected to the Egyptian system. Suez itself has a new station, which lies somewhat outside the city centre.

We are really here to see the Canal – and for this there is only one place that can be recommended – the Red Sea Hotel, situated directly at the entrance to the Suez Canal. In the morning at breakfast in the top storey one can stand and take photographs of the ships - something one can barely do otherwise along the Canal. The world's ocean-going ships have been passing here since 1869. The Canal is 162 km. long and in contrast to the Panama Canal there are no locks. Ships work in convoys and in a one-way system; there are three passing places. An average passage lasts up to 16 hours and costs around \$250,000. For Egypt this income source is even more important than that from Tourism – but this is the cause of the problem for us, for the Canal and its banks are a high-security zone and almost impossible to access. Apart from the hotel there are very few exceptions. There are the various free Ferries across the Canal – there are about a dozen of them, but not marked on any map. One gets close to the ships here and can photograph them without problems. There is also a good view from the 70m-high Mubarak-Peace-Bridge. Although it is the only bridge over the Canal, there is very little traffic. It appears to be banned for lorries, since these use either the ferry at El Qantara or the tunnel near Ismailiya.

On the western ramp to the bridge, shortly before reaching the summit, one could even halt briefly and risk a quick shot; but this is not recommended on the eastern bank as it is overlooked from a Check Point and the Military may overreact. All links between Egypt and the Sinai with its special status as a partially-demilitarized zone are classified, like the Canal itself, as strategically significant.

..... Whoever wants to get a photo of both ship and train ... has only few opportunities. One needs to know the timetable between Port Said and Ismailiya, and at the right moment stand on a low hillock of sand. To the south of El Qantara along the road to Port Said there are two such. They are easy to reach and provide the ideal standpoint for a photograph. Nevertheless a photographer would be advised not to hang around here too long; these hillocks are actually part of a military defence system and are to some extent fitted out with disused bunkers. One can locate these very easily on Google Earth, since, thanks to watering, they are surrounded by a patch of greenery! In fact, use of satellite pictures is highly recommended in general. In the desert sands of the Sinai railway lines have already disappeared under enormous travelling sand dunes. Since there are no exact maps available, one gets a better impression of their routes from above.

Why did Egypt build the largest railway swing bridge of the world, over the Suez Canal, and further a line of around 100 km. into the Sinai desert, which is then never used? Between the swing bridge at El Ferdan and the small town of Bir el Abd a handful of new, generously-laid out stations were built. In the meantime they have become the target of metal thieves and are decaying. It is almost impossible to make out the line from ground level, since the sand dunes move over it. Wind, sand and termites already made life hard for the former Sinai Railway; The new 640m super swing bridge is already the fifth, for the Canal has been constantly widened. It belongs to the Egyptian National Railways (ENR) and was brought into use in November 2001. In April 2003 a modest passenger service could be observed on the Sinai line. A continuation to El Arish and Rafah would have re-established the historic rail link to the Gaza Strip and Israel. But now comes the Big Surprise: The brand-new railway line is not just the victim of plunderers and the wind; In March 2012 the Demolition Train was at work, dismantling the rail panels. Whatever the enormous and well-guarded railway bridge are there for now, only the Military and perhaps Allah know.

One can with much less stress take a Nile Cruise from Luxor to Aswan. ... In Aswan the next challenge awaits. For foreigners, the railway ends here. The line however goes 20km. further on, climbing steeply to the Aswan High Dam. The line should be built eventually further on to the Sudan. The enormous station building bears witness to this. But the Egyptians have such panic concerning a possible attack on the Dam, that the line is taboo to all foreigners. The solution lies in a brief professional conversation with the engine driver; a chat about the characteristics of the Henschel loco soon brings an invitation to the driver's cab.....

Once back at Aswan we are able to take the train back to Luxor. For the last adventure however one will need to hire a car. The drive goes through the Libyan desert – DO check the security situation first – to the tiny oasis of Bahariya. Here there is a small hotel, run by a German..... Whereas we have to fight against snow and snowdrifts, here there are similar and year-long problems. The desert railway from Bahariya Oasis to Helwan has constantly to battle against sandstorms and wandering sand dunes. The 300km. railway is wide open to the desert wind, which can be up to 40° hot. There are constant derailments, as the fine sand piles up too high on the rails – and so, just like our snowploughs, ploughs have to be used to keep the tracks clear.

The single-track Ore Railway was opened in 1979 and had to be reconstructed twenty years later. It has twelve crossing stations, in which the track-clearance machines are also stationed. The trains require 8 or 9 hours travel time, and a road runs parallel to the railway most of the way. The problems with the blowing sand lead to a very irregular timetable. After one of the many derailments the line can be blocked for several days....“

Travel Notes: One requires for entry a *Vi-sum* for the whole of Egypt, not just the 'little visa' for restricted holiday areas. Before setting off check on the Foreign Office website for the latest information. In general one should avoid large gatherings of people and travelling at night. Reaction to photography can be very varied. Even desert landscapes can count as military areas. It is advisable to keep a spare card with photos that one can demonstratively delete if required..... In general the Police and Military are friendly towards Germans. The available maps of Egypt are not very accurate or helpful. Especially in Sinai and around the Suez Canal areas roads are marked which are in fact not for public use. The roads along the Canal are open only for patrol vehicles; the roads leading across the Sinai and that along the Israeli border are only open for military vehicles.'

(ii). A CATASTROPHIC ACCIDENT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

From 'Fahrplancenter News' No. 49 (October 2012 – April 2013) p.15.

'On 17.11.2012 an omnibus was in collision with an express train at Manfaut, some 350km. south of Cairo in the province of Assyut. In the bus were 60 children on an excursion from their Kindergarten. 47 of the children died at the scene of the accident, as well as the bus driver and his deputy. The level crossing keeper had fallen asleep at his post and was in consequence unable to lower the barriers in time. A further 15 people were severely injured. The children were all between 4 and 8 years old.

This appalling accident had several consequences, whereby in all likelihood the crossing keeper himself would get the smallest punishment. Only a few hours following this incident the General Director of the State Railways and Transport Minister Rashad al-Matini was immediately sacked from his posts and there followed an extensive political debate which could even lead to damage to the current State President. All parties are agreed that the permanent and still flourishing corruption had led to a state where many measures proposed for the improvement of safety in transport systems are simply not carried out, for the money flows instead far too often into private channels instead of where it is intended to go. In the current case two decisive factors fell together. For reasons of economy the crossing keeper was forced to work 12-hour shifts without a break and at this particular crossing the warning of oncoming trains was no longer possible, for the telephone link had been broken; The crossing keeper therefore had to lower his barriers 'on sight' when he could see that a train was approaching – and this on a main line with heavy traffic and with some trains travelling at 100 km/h or more!

This is not the first time that a severe accident in Egypt has led to changes. A rehabilitation programme for the 3rd. Class coaches was only begun after a train on this same Cairo – Aswan line caught fire in February 2009 and 370 people died. This has been until now the worst catastrophe in the country.'

(iii). AND ANOTHER ACCIDENT.

'On 15.01.2013 there was a further train catastrophe in Badrasheen near Gizeh. Two passenger coaches of an express train from Aswan to Cairo derailed; both were filled with recruits for the Army. The rest of the train remained undamaged, but in these two carriages 19 people died and a further 107 were injured, some seriously. At the site of the accident spontaneous demonstrations against the government were held, for the Islamic-oriented Government is accused of totally neglect-

ing public transport. When Prime Minister Qandil arrived at the scene he was immediately driven away again by the angry crowd. According to press reports this was the fifth fatal accident on the Egyptian railways since the controversial President Morsi took office in June 2012. The authorities have announced an investigation in order to find out whether the accident was caused by problems on the track or the rolling stock, or whether it resulted from a sabotage attack.'

C. LIBYA.

From 'Fahrplancenter News' No. 49 p.16.

'In 2012 the new Libyan government was certain that the railway construction projects begun in the time of Ghaddafi were not to be pursued and many reasons were found to speak out against the railways. However, only seven months later they went through the books in Tripoli again and reached a different conclusion.

The railway projects are to be continued! Only 24 hours after this was announced by the Transport Ministry on 20.01.2013 there were positive reactions from the RZD, the Russian State Railways. On 05.02.2013 several technicians and members of the RZD Directorate, including Director Saltanov, arrived in Tripoli. Their first activities included a thorough evaluation of the state of the construction sites, the existing rolling stock and the buildings. The damage to the 554km. line from Benghazi to Sirte was classed as severe. French engineers had already described the state of the railway construction sites as 'totally destroyed.' In an RZD report issued fifteen days later it was stated that there was indeed severe and widespread damage and that rails and sleepers had been stolen from sections totalling several kilometres, but that it is possible to repair or replace everything. Confidence was expressed that the additional costs for the US\$4.5 Billion project would not be 'significant'. Unfortunately only a few details were made available, but these included confirmation of the theft of rails and in several locations where the route runs through cuttings these have been filled with rubbish – whereby local authorities even suspect that in two or three places poisonous waste has been dumped. But this statement confirmed the Libyan authorities in their desire to resume the railway construction. For this is also a matter of creating job opportunities. On the line Benghazi – Sirte alone there were 3,500 persons working before the Revolution, 2,700 of whom were Libyans. For this line Benghazi – Sirte there had been delivered from Russia before the Revolution all the rails, a 100-ton railway crane, ballast and rail transport wagons. Apparently the first diesel locos also arrived in the country at the port of Ras Lanuf shortly before the conflict started. The harbour authorities at

Ras Lanuf also confirm the arrival of some passenger coaches. These are painted dark brown and have fittings for air filters and air conditioning.

Less is known about the lines which were to be built by Chinese companies. The Libyan Government wishes to reactivate all the construction sites and had accordingly submitted a request to the China Railway Construction Corporation CRCC, but in China they are less willing to share information. However there is some evidence that things are beginning to move again here also. At the end of July 2012 the firm Ding Sheng Machinery (DS-MAC) received an order for supply to Libya of a stone and concrete crushing machine. This machine is to be used on the not-yet ballasted sections of the Tripoli – Ras Ejder line, and here railway ballast is to be produced from the rubble of destroyed houses. The machine is mobile and brings the ballast it creates directly to the railway alignment where it is needed, so that track panels can be laid directly afterwards.'

D. TURKEY.

(i). CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.
From 'Fahrplancenter News' 49 p.19.
'The State Railways TCDD are currently investing heavily in modernisation, but this is leading to several interruptions in services. At present the following lines are affected:-

Irmak – Karabük – Zonguldak and Balıkesir – Kütahya have been suspended from March 2013 until further notice due to work on the tracks.

Gaziantep – Nusayin is out of action until 31st. May 2013. Some of the works here were necessary due to the conflict in the adjacent civil war in Syria, which had affected the tracks. The 293km. section from Karkemis to Nusaybin forms in many sections the state border between Turkey and Syria.

In connection with the Marmaray Project in Istanbul the entire traffic on the European network was suspended from March 2013, this including the local trains from Istanbul to Üzünköprü, as new signalling and security equipment is being installed. According to the TCDD services should be resumed at the end of March 2014.

On 24th. March 2013 the TCDD introduced three daily YHT high-speed trains between Eskisehir and Konya. This led to a shortening of the workings of the IC trains Anadolu and Toros Ekspresi to the section Konya – Adana only. However the timings of these trains are not coordinated with the arrival and departure times of the YHT trains from/to Eskisehir.

From 1st. May 2013 the station at Izmir Alsancak was closed for rebuilding 'until further notice'; all trains to and from Izmir now use the Basmane station.

The YHT link Ankara – Konya

has been served from 6th. March 2013 by eight daily train pairs.'

(The Turkrail site adds: 'All long-distance trains end at Cerkezköy, 115 km from Istanbul, from where a bus replacement service is operated (see the updates on <http://www.seat61.com/Turkey.htm#Lau6srW9CkE>). Commuter trains still operate from Sirkeci to Halkali (27 km) and Yedikule. At Sirkeci there is a small museum inside the station and a tank engine plinthed outside. A few years ago there used to be a dumped steam loco at Halkali shed.'

(ii). BURSA METRO. GOING DUTCH.

From NVBS 'Op de Rails' 12/2012, p.586, thanks to Marc Stegeman:

'The RET transport company from Rotterdam sold 44 subway trains, metro type T (SG2 & SGR2) with numbers in the 5202 through 5271 range, to an undisclosed trading company. Part of the remainder of the metro trains in this range will be operated by RET until 2014. This trading company sold the trains to the city of Bursa in Turkey. Some trains went straight from Rotterdam to Bursa but others were first overhauled in Germany before continuing their journey to Bursa. First transport was planned for October 16th. 2012 from the depot at 's-Gravenweg in Rotterdam. But due to the long trailer being unable to negotiate a tight curve around some obstacles, the first transport was delayed until October 19th. Only 25 units will be operated in Bursa, the remainder will be cannibalized. In Bursa at present trains alike to Stadtbahn B are running and new trains similar to the Frankfurt am Main U5 type trains.'

E. ETHIOPIA.

From 'Fahrplancenter News' No. 49 p. 25:

(i). ADDIS ABEBA TRAM.

'The Ethiopian firm Metals & Engineering Corporation (MetEC) has produced the first tramcar in Addis Abeba; the bogies and motors were delivered from Hungary but all other components were made in Ethiopia. This is the first train for the 34.25km. long standard-gauge tramway network of Addis Abeba, the infrastructure for which is being built by Chinese firms.'

(ii). NEW ETHIOPIAN NETWORK.

'The existing railway from Djibouti to Addis Abeba will be totally rebuilt with Chinese help as a standard-gauge line, double track and electrified. To some extent the old alignment will be re-used, but in regions with sharp curves or alignments through built-up areas in many cases a new alignment will be chosen in order to maintain the operating parameters. Investment in this line is estimated as US\$ 2.8 Billion. This line will become a part of a

הרכבת

4,744 km. national railway network in Ethiopia, construction of which is partially by Chinese firms; about a half of the lines will be built by firms from Turkey and Brazil.'

F. PALESTINE.

BACK TO 'THE ARC'?

From Frank Adam:

'... I chanced upon Alan Dershowitz's 'The Case for Peace', pub. Wiley 2005. On p.41 and maps pp. 42-43 he refers to a NY Times report of a RAND 'The Arc' plan for the practicalities of an Arab West Bank and Gaza state based on a spinal high speed railway from Jenin to Dahariyeh down the desert margin of the 'West Bank' and onto the Gaza Strip Rafah Airport and Town to Bet Hanun in the North of the Strip – and potential to join the Israil networks's Ashkelon – Haifa, Haifa – Irbid and Haifa – Beirut lines (besides a rebuild of the Rafah – Kantara Egyptian line.) The plan may be found on the internet as a .pdf through < May2005 RAND 'The Arc' rail plan for PA/ West Bank > and the report has more than enough maps of similar-sized conurbations/countries with water obstacles (e.g. Denmark, Holland, San Francisco Bay Area, Greater Cairo) and an outline costing of \$8 Billion – comprising \$3 Bn for the rail and stations, \$2 Bn+ for the parallel highway, water main and IT fibre-optic main; \$2 Bn+ for for new E-W suburbs between the old town centres and the new stations with education / hospital / business campuses at the new stations; \$1 Bn for the three pluses and incidentals in the previous categories. The line could also carry rakes of container flats (by night) and would link with existing towns by buses on dual carriageways – airport style.

It is perhaps sadly significant that such a plan had to come out of America and indeed seems to have been authored by people with German/Jewish names. The project (and Alan Dershowitz's book) came out bang in the middle of Intifada II and so got no publicity. Instead it seems to have sunk without trace – Rawabi, the new Arab Yuppie town being built with Qatari money at the 25km. half-way point between Nablus and Jerusalem, and opposite Ariel and Salfit, is on the East side of the main North-South road. The maps also omit Beit Hanun and Dahariyya and the map that shows Israel Railways is out of date and did not even indicate dotted lines for projected expansion.

Dershowitz also mentions the Israil offer of track rights between a revived WW1 British Rafah – Gaza – (Lod) line via the Ashdod freight freight line to Qiryat Gat and a new branch to be built from Kiryat Gat to Taqumieh which is north-west of Hebron. That could have been done in the 1990's and can still be done in six months with pick and shovel, never mind bulldozers etc, as a pilot project for security and equipment – but it seems to have drowned

in issues of sovereignty, security and now the Fatah – Hamas fight.'

101:08

G. JORDAN.

From Andrew Wilson: Report on a visit to Jordan, not railway specific.

18th April 2013, Amman Station.

No movement on the railway during my visit but staff said there was a weekly tourist train to Jiza, which is near the international airport. They also mentioned a tourist passenger train on the Aqaba line but were not very specific. I got the impression that this was not a frequent operation. No traffic in the Syria direction for obvious reasons.

Motive power seen around the station:-

Japanese Pacific No 71 and North British 2-8-2 No 23 outside the loco shed, looking bright and serviceable.

Jung 2-8-3 No 53, being repaired outside the shed. Looked to have recently been pulled out of a dead line for restoration to steam.

2-6-2 tank No 61 looking complete and serviceable in the shed.

Jung 2-8-2 No 51 in the shed, appeared to be out of service.

GE diesel 30213 in the shed and looked serviceable.

Another 2-6-2 tank was on an isolated bit of track south of the station building. Many parts missing.

Also, another tender loco was standing "round the corner" on the bridge over the road. Not seen until after the visit, so no details.

One Wickham railcar stabled by the station.

Passenger coaches standing in the yard were the four old carriages which have been based at Amman for many years, plus the 'Royal Saloon' of the modern coaches built on tank wagon chassis. This last has been provided with some additional suspension to improve the poor ride quality of the freight bogies. There was no opportunity to see if the ride was improved. The old coaches have proper carriage bogies which give a satisfactory ride.

A curiosity noted in the yard was a barrier made of old rail with rolling marks AHV (of Spain) 1907 plus an inscription in Arabic letters, identifying the customer.

24th April, Wadi Rum Station.

Not strictly on the Hejaz Railway, but rather on the more modern extension down to Aqaba Port for phosphate export. At this station a passenger train was found parked in a siding, with an anonymous Japanese Pacific coupled to four old coaches and a low sided bogie open wagon with sandbag-protected positions for soldiers to fight off attackers. So this was the tourist train which had been mentioned at Amman. It was not clear when this train runs or how far it travels but presumably Wadi Rum Station is one of the terminals and there is a re-enactment of a Lawrence style raid. There is a turning triangle, so the whole train can be turned once drifting sand has been cleared off the rails. No sign of any watering or other operating facilities for the steam train. The oily motion of the locomotive was coated with wind-blown dust. I wonder where the old coaches came from, because I have never seen any at Amman other than those which I saw a few days earlier. There were no phosphate trains during my visit, but these are normally heavily loaded and hauled with pairs of diesel electric locomotives of larger size than the one at Amman.'

H. LEBANON.

The following website links to an amazing set of ancient sepia photographs of the construction of the Beirut – Damascus Railway in 1895 – highly recommended!

<http://humus.livejournal.com/3209746.html>



Steve Waldenberg, our UK Publisher visited Prague early June and made a visit to a proposed museum to be housed in a former Prague Railway station.

Bubny station has an important historical legacy. It is here that some 50 000 Czech Jews boarded the transports to concentration camps. The group story tells us about events for which we have been searching an adequate name since the end of the Second World War.

The destruction of one of Prague's three fundamental cultural entities is something unspeakably frightening. A multi-layered horror: The mere number of victims, families destroyed, the post-war stigma felt by the few survivors. As the last survivors slowly die out, it is as if the Jewish wartime suffering was becoming just like long-past stories from the Bible.

Prague does not have an exhibition space dedicated to a dignified presentation of the subject of the Jewish transports, using contemporary rhetoric and with a suitable documentary scope. It still lacks a museum in the city from which tens of thousands of citizens of the democratic First Czechoslovak Republic were sent into the unknown. Bubny station is a place where this history can be felt at every step. Today, this location exists somewhat outside of the city's everyday life. Under recent urban visions for Prague, however, it will be the focal point of a new city district. In pre-war days this area was home to many thousands of Prague's Jews.

He was also invited to coffee with Yaacov Levi, the Israel Ambassador to the Czech Republic, at the Israel Embassy. The Ambassador has an interest in railways.

We are advised that there are considerable numbers of suitable rolling stock in and around the Czech Republic but if any HaRakevet readers in Europe might be able to help with the sourcing of suitable railway carriages and a locomotive to stand on the rail line that leads out of Prague and onwards to Terezin - seen above behind the text.

Contact details - pavel@k2films.cz

Rail side view of station which is still much as it was in the war years.



NOTES AND COMMENTS.

(i). **PURIM IN TEL AVIV** – this six-minute b/w documentary has some brief but fascinating shots of a 'Baldwin tank' arriving in Tel Aviv, a HL 0-6-OST on (presumably) empty stock and a glimpse of a standard-gauge Sentinel railcar at work!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?Ev=LpnqdxvDPU>

(ii). On 100:10: Sybil actually sent some covering notes to the article on Electrification Plans in the 1930's, which inadvertently got left out. So with apologies, here they are:

I found in the Jerusalem Post archives an article dated January 1934 presenting an elaborate plan for new electric railways in Palestine. Since electrification of IR is now a hot topic, I thought this could be an interesting comparison. I have retyped the article to make it fit an A4 page for easy reproduction in "Harakevet". The map is my own work, based on the one on page 68 of Paul's book and a map of the Hejaz Railway showing stations that I found on the Internet. It was very difficult to trace some of the places mentioned in the article as they do not appear on any maps of the period, and I have quite a large collection of (photocopies of) Palestine maps from the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. The Valley of Achor is mentioned in the Bible but apparently nowhere else, so a lot of guesswork was involved.'

(iii). **SOURCES FOR SAMAKH STATION ARTICLE** in 100:09.

Owing to technical problems the footnotes were omitted from this article, which is a pity. So for the sake of completeness (and in deference to the author's research) let it be noted that for the section 'The First Station' a source was:

Zalman Vinograd "By train to Tiberias" Matov Tiveria, No. 8 (Dec. 1990) pp. 42-53

For 'The Second Station' sources were:

Mustafa Abasi "The Algerian community in Galilee during the Ottoman rule up to 1948" Horizons in Geography, No. 68-69, (2007) pp. 56-72. and:

H.S.Gullet, The Australian Imperial forces in Sinai and Palestine, 1914-1918 (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1941) pp. 730-734.

For 'The Third Station' a source was. Doar Hayom, 20.4.1923, Davar 14.5.1929

(iv). **THE JAFFA AND JERUSALEM RAILWAY.**

From 'The Bible Standard' April. 1891, p.53. (Thanks to Tony Travis.)

'A recent number of the 'Railroad and Engineering Journal' contains the letter which we give below. It was written by the representative of the Baldwin Locomotive Works. The engine referred to is of the 'Mogul' type, with cylinders 15in, by 18in. Stroke, and six driving wheels 41 in. in diameter, and a Pony truck. The weight is 26 tons, the gauge 3ft. 3 in.:-

'Hotel Jerusalem, Jaffa. October 3rd. 1890.

Gentlemen – I am very glad to be able to report that we made a successful trial trip of the first engine – 'Jaffa' – today. All Jaffa was out to see it, including the Turkish Governor and his court. It was estimated that at least ten thousand people were on the housetops and along the line of the road, and over two-thirds of them never saw a locomotive before. Many of the Arab women moved their household effects along the line of the road several days ago, so as to be on hand when the great thing went along. Many flags were hoisted over public buildings in honour of the occasion. I got an American flag from the Consul and put it on the front bumper. The French engineer put two French flags on each corner of the cab, and we secured a Turkish one on the other corner of the bumper, and so we went up into the town. I doubt if any other engine built by the works ever received so much attention as 6-24 D; and as for me – well, I never expected people to regard me as the Arabs did today and have been doing. They simply think that I have been cutting and carving it out of a lot of railroad iron and boxes. They have a great respect for the French engineers, and think them very smart, but when it comes to making a machine such as they saw today, 'they can't do it in France,' 'they had to send to America for a man to make it.' The officers of the road were very much concerned about the engine getting through some of the sharp curves along the wall, and also the strength of the track; in fact, they offered to make any alteration I might want. I had examined the track carefully, and saw nothing that the engine was not able to take easily. Before starting they got some screw jacks, blocks, and other things, and were piling them on the engine. I asked the superintendent what they were for, and he said to put her on the track, if she got off. 'All right,' I said, 'but we won't need them.' We went over the short piece of road in good style and without a stop. She went fast enough also to keep the flags to the breeze, so that all could see what sort of flags they were. They were all very much pleased that no change had to be made, and that the engine curved so nicely. The machinery has all come right so far and without trouble. We expect to start on the second one tomorrow.'

(v) **NAVON'S PROMOTION.**

From 'Die Neuzeit' (Wien) of 21st. July 1893. (Trans. By Editor.) 'Jerusalem; The holder of the

Concession for the construction of the railway between Jerusalem and Jaffa, Herr Joseph Effendi Navon, has been raised by the Sultan to the rank of Bey. At the same time he was awarded the Medjidie-Order 2nd. Class.'

(vi). **A RACK RAILWAY ON MOUNT SINAI!!!**

From 'Die Neuzeit' (Wien) 15th. July 1897: thanks to Peter Kraus for several such snippets of 'old news'.

„Eine Zahnradbahn auf den Berg Sinai.

Wie aus Suez berichtet wird, projectirt die englische Gesellschaft, die sich in Kairo und Constantinople um die Concession zum Bau einer Bahn von Port Said durch die Sinai und die arabische Halbinsel nach Bassorah am persischen Meerbusen bewirbt, zugleich auch den Bau einer Zahnradbahn von der zukünftigen Bahnstation El-Tor (Hafenplatz) auf den nahen Berg Sinai. Auf dem Berge, der nur von einer Seite zugänglich ist, soll das Bahnhofsgebäude dort errichtet werden, wo sich jetzt das von der Kaiserin Helene, der Mutter Constantin's des Großen, aufgestellte steinerne Kreuz befindet, und wo der Tradition zufolge Moses stand, als er die Offenbarung empfing. Die Bahn wird auch an der Höhle vorbeiführen, in welcher der Prophet Elias einige Tage geweiht hat, als er von den Baalspriestern floh.“

Translation: A Rack Railway on Mount Sinai.

It is reported from Suez that the English company which is currently negotiating in Cairo and Constantinople for the concession for the construction of a railway line from Port Said through the Sinai and the Arabian Peninsula to Basra on the Persian Gulf, is planning at the same time the construction of a rack railway from the future station at the harbour at El Tor to the nearby Mount Sinai. On the mountain, which can only be ascended from one side, it is planned that the station building will be erected on the spot currently occupied by the stone cross erected by the Empress Helene, the mother of Constantine the Great, and which is also the place where, according to tradition, Moses stood in order to receive the Revelation. The railway will also pass by the cave where the Prophet Elijah spent some time when he was fleeing from the priests of Baal.“

(vii). **'BANKRUPTCY OF JAFFA - JERUSALEM RAILWAY.**

From 'Die Neuzeit' (Wien) 17th. April 1894. Jerusalem: Die Eisenbahn-Gesellschaft Jaffa-Jerusalem hat ihre Zahlungen einstellen müssen. Am 21. August 1892 kam die erste Lokomotive mit einigen Wage in Jerusalem um; sie erregte das Staunen des Volkes, welches in Schaare zum Jaffa-thore hinaus in der Richtung nach Bethlem um das Wunder zu sehen. Muhamedaner und Juden erklärten das schnaubende, Wasser spritzende, pfeifende und Qualm ausströmende Ungethüm für ein Werk des Satans. Die Bahn kam jedoch erst am 26. September 1893 in Betrieb; jeden Tag ging ein Zug von Jaffa nach Jerusalem und einer in umgekehrter Richtung. Es gab in den Zügen zwei Classen von Wagen; die Wagen zweiter Classe

sind nur für gewöhnliche Eingeborene; doch sind die Wagen erster Classe auch höchst primitiv; sie bieten keine Bequemlichkeiten und in ihnen können so viel Personen Platz nehmen, wie es beliebt. So kann es kommen, dass der Aufenthalt darin recht ungemütlich wird. Kommen vornehme Personen, so werden sie aufgefordert, einen Extrazug zu nehmen. Die Eisenbahnfahrt mit ihren vielen Windungen dauert von Jerusalem nach Jaffa mindestens 3 Stunden, ungekehrt bergauf von Jaffa nach Jerusalem zwischen 4 und 5 Stunden, während auf der geraden Strasse ein gut beschirrter Frachtwagen oder ein Reiter etwa 6 Stunden von Jerusalem zur Küste Zeit braucht. Von vornherein hat man es vorausgesagt, dass die Bahn nicht rentieren würde, da Jaffa kein Hafen ist und eine oft nicht zugängliche Rhede hat; im Winter können Segelschiffe dort gar nicht ankern. In Jaffa liegt der Bahnhof eine halbe Stunde von der Zollstation entfernt und in Jerusalem ist vom Jaffathore noch ein höchste beschwerlicher Weg, bergauf und bergab zum Bahnhof zu machen, Der Jerusalemer Bahnhof ist gegenüber der deutschen Colonie.“

Translation: 'The Jaffa – Jerusalem Railway Company has had to suspend making payments. On 21st. August 1892 the first locomotive and wagon came to Jerusalem; there it caused much amazement amongst the population, which streamed out of the Jaffa Gate in the direction of Bethlehem in order to gaze at this miracle. Mohammedans and Jews alike declared this snuffling, water-spouting, whistling and smoking monster as a work of the Devil. The Railway however did not start operations on 26th. September 1893. [sic.]; Each day a train went from Jaffa to Jerusalem and one in the opposite direction.

There were two classes of accommodation in the trains; the second class carriages were only for normal natives; the first class coaches however were also exceedingly primitive. They offered little in the way of comfort and as many people could sit down in them as wanted to [i.e. No separate seating but only benches]. So it could occur that the stay in these carriages was really quite unpleasant. Should persons of a higher class come along, they might well be instructed instead to hire a special train! The railway journey with its many winding curves lasted from Jerusalem to Jaffa for at least three hours; in the other direction uphill between four and five hours, whereas on the levelled road a well-appointed freight wagon or a rider could get from Jerusalem to the coast in around six hours.

From the very beginning people had said that the line could not pay its way, since Jaffa is not really a harbour and has approach roads which are themselves often impossible to reach; in winter sailing ships cannot anchor there at all. In Jaffa the station is situated a half an hour from the Customs House and in Jerusalem it is a long and difficult way up and down from the Jaffa Gate to the station. The Jerusalem station is opposite the German Colony.'

(viii). 1948: THE WORDS THAT DROVE THE FIRST HEBREW TRAIN.

By Ofer Aderet, in 'Haaretz' 14. April 2013.

'Immediately following the Declaration of Independence in 1948, steps were taken to define the status of the 'First Hebrew Railway', later to become Israel Railways. The founding document dealing with this issue has just come to light, as part of a group of documents released by the State Archives ahead of Israel's 65th. Independence Day celebrations.

The Israel Railways website explains that 'It is difficult to determine the exact date of birth of the railway company. On the one hand, it is not Independence Day itself, since the management of the company passed into Jewish hands before the Declaration of Independence. On the other hand, the first inter-city route was inaugurated afterwards, with the name Israel Railways instituted even later. In any case, Israel Railways was launched amid the unfolding of the War of Independence.'

Moshe Paicovitch, who was among the senior and veteran employees of the company during the British Mandate years, was appointed to head the Hebrew Railway in coordination with the institutions of the emerging state. On May 16th. he issued the first Management Circular, on behalf of the 'Ministry of Transportation's Railway Department'. He did not conceal his great excitement at this event.

'A great and joyful privilege has been granted to me to be the coordinator of the railway system on behalf of the government of Israel. You have been granted the privilege of becoming the employees of the first-ever Hebrew Railway in the young state. This great privilege places a great responsibility on us and demands supreme efforts,' he wrote. 'Until now we have all worked for a foreign employer. From here on we work for our own nation and independent government. Work will now be done in our own language and following our own path. We are proud of being public servants of a Hebrew government, and we must strive to make our government proud of us,' he continued.

Paicovitch wrote to his employees that 'at this time, when the whole nation is mobilized for the struggle, the trains are but one cog, although an important one, in our economic and military organization. Each of us should see himself as mobilized toward this effort, no less than our brethren on the front lines. Thus, our discipline, our alertness, our readiness and commitment to work should be as strong as it is in the army.' 'Every person should stand on guard! Each should fulfil his duty faithfully! Everyone should carefully obey his supervisor! Let each of us, without exception, remember that we are all working for the same goal: exercising our right to live a free and dignified life in our land,' Paicovitch wrote at the end of his letter.

The name 'Israel Railways' was not yet in use. In internal and public documents, various names were used in reference to the railway system, including 'The Government Railways'. Toward the end of 1948, Paicovitch

tried to change this, and following correspondence with the Ministry of Transportation, Israel Railways was chosen as the new official designation.'

(ix). FLYING BOATS AT SAMAKH.

To add to 100:09, SAMAKH: From 'Die Stimme' 8th. Oktober 1937.

Flugzeugstützpunkt auf dem See von Tiberias. 'Auf dem See von Galiläa soll ein neuer Flugzeugstützpunkt eingerichtet werden. Wie es heißt, werden in Zukunft die Flugboote der englischen Luftfahrtgesellschaft Imperial Airways den See auf ihren Flügen Alexandria – Bagdad und nach Indien als Zwischenlandungsplatz benutzen. Gerüchtweise verlautet hier, daß der neue Flugzeugstützpunkt im Zusammenhang mit den Unruhen gleichzeitig auch der militärischen Luftfahrt zur Verfügung gestellt werden soll.'

Translation:

'An Air Base is to be established on the Sea of Galilee. It is announced that in the future the Flying Boats of the English airline Imperial Airways will use the Sea as an intermediate halt on its route between Alexandria and Baghdad and thence to India. There are also rumours that the new base will be made available at the same time to the military, in connection with the current Disturbances.'

(x). POST IN PALESTINE.

From: 'Jüdische Volksstimme' of 15th. May 1907:

Postverkehr zwischen Jaffa und Jerusalem. Bekanntlich haben die fremden Mächte in Palästina ihre eigenen Postanstalten. Da dieser fremde Postdienst der Kontrolle der türkischen Regierung nicht unterliegt, hat die Regierung unter hoher Konventionalstrafe den verschiedenen ihrischen Bahnen die Beförderung fremder Postsäcke untersagt. Deutschland, England, Frankreich, Russland und Österreich-Ungarn einigten sich infolgedessen und unterhalten einen eignen, von der Eisenbahn unabhängigen Postbetrieb, der zwischen Jaffa und Jerusalem seit einer Reihe von Jahren ausgezeichnet funktioniert. Ein großmächtiger Postwagen verläßt nachmittags Jaffa und trifft frühmorgens in Jerusalem ein. Dieser Postwagen wird jetzt, wie die 'Frantj. Zeitg.' meldet, da er leztens einen Angriff von Beduinen abwehren mußte, auf Antrag des Generalgouverneurs von Beirut durch türkische Zapftiehs gesichert werden.'

Translation: 'As is well known the Foreign Powers in Palestine maintain their own postal services. Since these foreign postal organisations are not under the control of the Turkish Government, the government has prohibited the various railways in the country from conveying the postal sacks, on pain of a high penalty. Germany, England, France, Russia and Austria-Hungary have therefore agreed upon the establishment of an own joint postal service, independent of the Railway. This has now functioned between Jaffa and Jerusalem very well for a number of years. A large Postal Wagon leaves Jaffa in the afternoons and ar-

rives in Jerusalem in the early mornings. This postal wagon is now, at the request of the Governor General of Beirut and because it has in the recent past suffered some attacks from Beduins, escorted along its route by some Turkish Zaptiehs.'

(xi). ELECTRIFICATION IN 1911!

From: 'Jüdische Volksstimme', 6. September 1911.

'DIE ELEKTRISCHE IM HEILIGEN LANDE. 'Ohne daß davon viel in die Oeffentlichkeit gekommen ist, hat sich in Palästina ein großer Umschwung bemerkbar gemacht. Seit dem Siege der Jungtürken über Abdul Hamid ist in politischer, erzieherischer und ökonomischer Hinsicht ein großer Fortschritt zu verzeichnen. Bedeutende Eisenbahnen- und Transportkonzessionen sind erteilt und Jerusalem, Jericho und Palästinas neueste Stadt Beersheba haben ihre Wasserversorgung erhalten. Auch Damaskus hat verbesserte Wasserleitung bekommen und ist die erste Stadt im heiligen Lande, die eine elektrische Strassenbahn besitzt. Für Beirut ist ebenfalls eine Strassenbahn vorgeschlagen und auch Jerusalem soll in nächster Zeit dieses Verkehrsmittel erhalten. Eine belgische Gesellschaft hat bereits Pläne ausgearbeitet, die die volle Zustimmung der türkischen Regierung fanden. Auch auf allen Gebieten kaufmännischen Lebens bricht sich das Moderne immer mehr Bahn. Kürzlich hat sich die Regierung mit der Kanalisierungsfrage der Stadt Jerusalem beschäftigt. Jerusalem selbst hat, wie Konstantinopel, sämtliche Hunde aus der Stadt entfernt, die Straßen und Bürgersteige werden von den neugeschaffenen Sanitätsbeamten gereinigt, und erst kürzlich ist verschiedenen englischen und amerikanischen Gesellschaften die Konzession für die Anlage von Telephonen in Jerusalem und auch in Konstantinopel bewilligt werden.'

Translation:-

'THE 'ELECTRIC' IN THE HOLY LAND'. Without much about it having been published, a large change has become apparent in Palestine. Since the victory of the Young Turks over Abdul Hamid there has been a surge of progress noticeable in political, educational and economic areas. Important railway and transport concessions have been allocated and Jerusalem, Jericho and Palestine's newest city Beersheba now all have water supplies. Damascus also has received a better water supply and is the first city in the Holy Land to possess an electric tramway. A Tramway is also proposed for Beirut, and also Jerusalem should receive this means of transport in the near future. A Belgian company has already worked out plans, which have received the full approval of the Turkish government. Also in all areas of economic activity modern methods are becoming increasingly common. A short time ago the Government concerned itself with the sewerage system for the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem has, like Constantinople, banished all dogs from the city limits and the streets and pavements are now cleaned by sanitary officials, and only a short while ago various

English and American companies received the concessions to install Telephones in Jerusalem and also in Constantinople.'

(xii). A RAILWAY PLAN FROM EGYPT TO JERUSALEM.

From 'Jüdische Volksstimme' 17th. January 1912.

RAILWAY PROJECT PORT SAID – JAFFA – BEERSHEBA – JERUSALEM.

'Wie die Zeitung 'HaOr' in einer ihrer letzten Nummern mitteilt, bewirkt sich eine anglo-ägyptische Gesellschaft um die Konzession zum Bau einer neuen Eisenbahn von Port-Said nach Jaffa. Die seit längerer Zeit schwebenden Unterhandlungen mit der türkischen Regierung haben durch den Ausbruch des tripolitanischen Krieges eine Unterbrechung erlitten, doch sollen nach einer Meldung der englischen Zeitung 'Globe' die Verhandlungen vor kurzem wieder aufgenommen worden und dem Abschluss nahe sein. Man schätzt die Kosten des Bahnbaues auf 60 Millionen Francs. Die betreffende Gesellschaft erwägt auch den Plan einer Weiterführung der Eisenbahn nach Jerusalem über Beer-Sheba. Sollte das Projekt zur Ausführung gelangen, so würde damit eine direkte Eisenbahnverbindung zwischen Jaffa bezw. Jerusalem und Kairo geschaffen sein. Dies wäre für die Entwicklung des Handels und Verkehrs zwischen Palästina und Aegypten von der allergrössten Bedeutung.'

Translation:-

'As the newspaper 'HaOr' recently reported, an Anglo-Egyptian Company has been engaged in obtaining a concession for the construction of a new railway from Port Said to Jaffa. The negotiations, which have already been in progress for some considerable time, were interrupted by the outbreak of the Tripolitanian War, but according to a report in the English newspaper 'Globe' they have now been resumed and are approaching a conclusion. The cost of the railway construction is estimated at 60 Million Francs. The company concerned is also considering a plan to extend the line via Beersheba to Jerusalem. Should this project reach fruition, a direct railway link will be established between Jaffa and Jerusalem and Cairo. This would be of enormous importance for the development of trade and traffic between Palestine and Egypt.'

(xiii). A 1930's PLAN FOR A LINE FROM GAZA TO AQABA.....

'STRATEGISCHE STRASSEN UND BAHNEN. From 'Die Stimme', 10th. November 1936:

'Die von der Palästina-Regierung vor einigen Jahren in Angriff genommene Chaussee Gaza – Akaba ist fertiggestellt. Die 20 Meter breite Strasse ist so stark gebaut, daß auf ihr ein lebhafter Verkehr von Militärkraftwagen und schwerer Artillerie vor sich gehen kann. Nunmehr hat die Regierung auch den Plan für den Bau einer Eisenbahnlinie von Gaza nach Akaba fertiggestellt und bestätigt. Die parallel zur Straße geführt werden soll, wird innerhalb eines Jahres fertiggestellt sein. Ein großer Heeresflughafen bei Akaba steht vor der Vollendung.'

Translation:-

'The main road from Gaza to Akaba which was begun by the Palestine Government some years ago is now complete. The road is 20m wide and is built to such a standard that heavy traffic with military lorries and heavy artillery can use it. The Government has now prepared and confirmed a plan for the construction of a railway line from Gaza to Akaba. This should run parallel to the road and will be completed within a year. A large military airfield near Akaba is also close to completion.' [Ed. adds: I have never heard of this plan before!]

(xiv). THE OLD STATION IN JERUSALEM.

(a). From 'Jewish Daily News', 30.04.2013, on Yahoo.

Dining and leisure complex to chug into old Jerusalem train station. The abandoned station house in a prime location will preserve the history of the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv railroad while offering many options for nightlife. (By Avigayil Kadesh)

Black-and-white photos of late 19th century gentry passing through Jerusalem's Old Train Station hang on the unfinished brick walls of an upstairs room at the abandoned station house, where the Jerusalem Development Authority (JDA) gave a recent press tour kicking off the planned reconstruction of the iconic building.

Rebranded "The First Station," the 130-year-old structure will not make practical use of the railroad tracks that still lie in disrepair in the large space behind the station house since the last train rolled through in 1998.

Not meant to revert to its previous life, The First Station instead will be a centre for dining and leisure as well as musical, literary and artistic events. Historical touches are to include those old photos and an outdoor exhibit of vintage locomotives, according to project spokeswoman Gili Katz.

Though the building is dilapidated, the location couldn't be better. The First Station sits on a premium piece of real estate at the crossroads of the upscale neighborhoods of the German Colony, Baka and Abu Tor, across David Remez Square from the Khan Theater and down the road from the Jerusalem Cinemateque and the Menachem Begin Heritage Center. In addition, the Jerusalem Theater is not far away and the Sherover Cultural Center is now being built in Abu Tor.

"This is a national preservation site that has been neglected for years," JDA Deputy CEO Anat Tzur told Haaretz. "It was not fitting, neither from a historical perspective nor for a capital city, for such a special place to look like that.

Preserving the old train station feel

A complex offering shopping, dining, culture and nightlife options in this area makes good business sense, though various attempts over the years have fallen flat. Due to open on May 14, 2013, The First Station will encompass exhibition and performance spaces, outdoor vendor carts and an assortment of eateries and gourmet restaurants. The NIS 35 million (\$9.3 Million) project is

financed by private investors, the municipality and business owners. In order to attract as wide a public as possible it will be open on Saturday (the Sabbath) – an unusual and controversial move for a venue in the Holy City.

Katz stresses that this is part of Mayor Nir Barkat's vision of making Jerusalem an attractive place not just for religious populations but also for non-religious residents and tourists. The nearby Cinemathèque is also open on Saturdays. "The mayor made this decision a long time ago after considering all sides, and he does not want to hurt or offend anyone," says Katz, who explains that approximately half the eateries in the new complex will be kosher and closed over the Sabbath. "Any restaurants that are privately owned will be open, while others that are part of national chains will be closed," she says.

The development plan also calls for a bike path that will link The First Station with Train-Track Park, a nearly-completed walking and cycling promenade constructed by Israel Railways and the Jerusalem municipality.

The property was won in an Israel Railways tender by the same group of men -- Assaf Hemo, Erez Navon and Avi Morduch -- who turned Tel Aviv-Jaffa's Hatachana, the neglected old Ottoman railway station at the opposite end of the route, into a thriving complex of cafés and restaurants, designer shops and art galleries. Both buildings were designed in classic 19th century European and Templar style using local materials.

The Old Jerusalem Train Station today

The investment group has promised to work with preservation architects to keep intact the original façade or footprint of the old Jerusalem limestone structure. They will operate and maintain the station on the proceeds from rent and income from special events.

The agreement stipulates that after 10 years, management of the site returns to the discretion of Israel Railways, but if the project is successful it's likely that it will continue to be run by the same group.

(ii). From Sybil, 12.05.2013:

'This evening I went to an event at The First Station (that's what the refurbished Jerusalem station has been named). I wasn't covering it for the JP so I was able to enjoy myself, which I did immensely. There's a superb exhibition of railway history in what was the waiting room. Lots of old photos (of course some were familiar to me; others I saw for the first time) and I took pix of everything. Also panels giving a brief history of each period: the 1890s, World War I, British Mandate etc.... and a look at the future. All this is only in Hebrew. Also screens with "slide" shows, again some material that was new to me. There is a lot more history in the Jerusalem station than in the Jaffa station. There's a small shop selling gifts, including flat-pack wooden models of the station building for self-assembly, in two sizes. I bought a small one!

The big open space held tables with glasses of wine. That and a few raisins etc.



were the only refreshments. The programme, according to the invitation starting at 7pm, was to include speeches by Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat and IR director-general Boaz Tzafirir. It was freezing cold, so I left a few minutes after Barkat arrived (before everyone sat down to listen to him spouting).

On Tuesday there's a big event open to the public, which I'll be

Photos: Jon Lipman



הרכבת

reporting on for the "In Jerusalem" local supplement. It's all day, with food stalls etc..

(xv). BEER SHEVA OLD STATION EXHIBITS.

In addition to the 8F 2-8-0 from Turkey, the vehicles lent by IR to Be'er Sheva Municipality are PR Saloon 97, former LSWR 3rd/Brake 316 and a WWI WD 10T van built to LNWR diagram D.88 and later converted by PR to a 7T meat van. Chen writes: 'The loan contract with Be'er Sheva Municipality states that they are to treat them as listed buildings, and approve with me beforehand any work to be done. My stated goal is to restore 97 as authentically as practicable and 316 and van externally only (the interior to be used for shops etc.). The LSWR 316 stands on modern freight bogies, and will remain so until someone donates more authentic ones (or funds a reproduction).'

(xvi). ANTISEMITISM ON THE DR?

In 'Lok Magazin' 6/2016 p. 52 is a note in an article on the DR 'standard' 750mm-gauge 2-10-2T's; there was a debate concerning the Knorr feedwater heater, which was of a special type and therefore more expensive. The railways in Saxony wanted instead to use the well-known Friedmann feedwater injector, in which they already had experience. Locomotives 99 751-756 were delivered with this Friedmann injector and performed satisfactorily,

but in 1938 the Reichsbahn Zentralamt demanded that all the machines of the class 99.75 had to be rebuilt back to use the Knorr equipment. Why was this? Could it be because Friedmann was a Jew?



**Tunnel mouth just before we entered, photographed from open truck
Twin tunnel ends (other tunnels) that we passed on the way back to the funfair
field, photographed from open truck**



*Mouths of twin
tunnels, "on dry land"*