

# HaRakevet-----

# הרכבת

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*A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East.*

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**44:1: The D.G.E. G. special Tour in the Negev, on I.R.'s longest bridge; loco 607 hauls generator coach 637 and ex-SNCF coaches 95 & 96. 3/11/98.**

**(Photo: Sybil Ehrlich.)**

### **44:3: EDITORIAL.**

Many thanks for various letters, e-mails etc. from many readers, welcoming the return of "Harakevet" after its enforced delays. There were also some criticisms of layout, content, etc. - yes, these letters DO get read ! Just to explain a little again of the production procedure: Over a period of months the magazine gradually accumulates on my computer, in four or five "files" representing several pages each. As information comes in I try to add it to "News from the Line", "Notes & Comments", "Other Middle East Railways" or wherever, and try to maintain the rough order of these "regular" headings; I lay it out as best I can on "Microsoft Works", with headings, item numberings, italics, spacing, captions and spaces for photos, etc. It is then sent to

S t e v e  
Waldenberg at  
Butterworth &  
Pilkington.  
Steve is also a  
transport en-  
thusiast (espe-  
cially for vin-  
tage cars) and  
manages to  
produce sev-  
eral "short-  
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magazines at  
his work, often  
using "left-  
over" paper  
from larger



**44:2:**

**New IR Alstom Bo-Bo diesel shunter No. 262 at Halfa Diesel Depot, 16/3/99. (Photo: Editor.)**

jobs. (Incidentally, this issue has been yet further delayed by a mishap in which the discette on which almost the entire issue had been prepared fell apart inside the computer itself, thus preventing even a downloading onto another floppy; the end result has been purchase of a new computer..... Fortunately most information could be salvaged.)

On HIS super-computer Steve then regenerates the entire text, changing the layout to suit what can best fit onto an A5 page, (and what appears as an A4 page on my screen doesn't always remain a page when converted down), with the photos "scanned" or "bled" in. Bearing in mind that the photos come in different sizes and degrees of sharpness, this means a fair amount of juggling work. Maps and diagrams are always to strange sizes. It is also he who adds the headings, occasionally changes the order to put a short item where it can fill a page, and so forth. The magazine is then printed and posted direct from his factory - I send him the adhesive address labels - this sometimes, by oversight, leads to only a single copy being sent to a subscriber who requires multiple copies, in which case a quick message to me will get the extras sent through.

Even with modern technology and a lot of un-costed work by Steve, there are not many printers who could lay out and produce 200 copies of a magazine like this at the price he manages. Until now we have not needed larger print runs, and to avoid too many headaches we have not tried to use advertising to cover any extra costs ! The magazine remains a "labour of love" for many contributors as well as the Editor. But maybe we will reconsider the two-column layout or the size of headings !

The content - well, a lot depends on what comes in. A few items have been on file an embarrassingly long time, and some are used now, but quite simply, if a major item comes in about Egypt, or Iran - there will be more on Egypt or Iran in that issue; if there have been major new traction imports - there will be more on those locos or coaches. Hedjaz reports tend to be lengthy when there has been a tour. Historical items depend also sometimes on what I have managed to type onto disc. Up until now I have been unable to get pictures off Internet or through e-mail in a quality sharp enough to reproduce. But I try to cover several aims at the same time (with varying degrees of success): one is to keep abreast of current developments, either through direct reporting or through "second-hand" reports from other publications; another is to ensure that as much as possible is placed "on record", in the belief that archive users in the future will benefit from material from many sources being compiled and published here. As well as individual subscribers, "Harakevet" is deposited in many archives and libraries, not all railway- but often history- or war-related. So relevant stuff from ancient newspapers or books is included because it ought to be preserved somewhere, and here seems to be the best place.

Issue 44 marks the end of another series. It has been an eventful year for the magazine. A renewal form is enclosed for those interested in renewing !

#### **44:4: NEWS FROM THE LINE.**

**a). Jerusalem Light Rail.** (cf. 42:4(c)). According to "*Railway Gazette International*" 1/99 p.13, "Jerusalem Transportation Masterplan Team has selected Semaly to review the LRT proposal in liaison with Lahmeyer and Hamburg Consult."

**b). Tel Aviv Metro.** From the same source: "Tel Aviv metro planning company NTA has called tenders for preliminary design of its first metro route from Petah Tikvah to Bat Yam and the light rail line from Tel Aviv central station to Holon."

On 8/3/99 Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, speaking at the "cornerstone laying ceremony" at Rosh HaAyin (see below), "again promised that the government will provide the budget for the construction of a subway in Tel Aviv.... he said Tel Aviv has become a large metropolis, and that it needs trains to connect it with outlying suburbs to solve its future transportation problems." Fine words, and it is surely a pure coincidence that an election is due in May.

**c). Lod area developments.** Sybil Ehrlich reports that the doubling from Tel Aviv Darom to Lod has now been completed; the station at Kfar Habad is finished, with "what must be the longest platforms east of Cambridge". [For our readers: Cambridge in England has one very long platform face serving trains in both directions, rather than the more normal

two platforms facing each other.] The official inauguration was on 18/12/98.

A sign has been erected between Lod and Kfar Habad stations indicating a project to build a new station at "Ganei Aviv", a new housing development on the outskirts of Lod. The station will be built by the developers rather than Israel Railways.

**d). Cardboard Models.** Another publicity gimmick is a new cardboard cut-out model of a JT42BW loco - which Sybil reckons is much easier to construct than the IC3 set was.

**e). Where is Israel ?** The 1/99 issue of "*Rail Business Report*" includes statistical tables covering many railways in different parts of the globe; intriguingly, Israel is not listed under "Middle East and North Africa", but as "other Countries". So there !

These are the figures for 1995; already, of course, well out-of-date but included here for the record:

Total route km.: 610. Total locos: 48; Multiple Unit Passenger Fleet: 10; Passenger Coaches: 88; Freight Wagons: 1,365. Passengers: 4,845,000. Freight tons 940,000. Diesel loco availability: 92%.

The figures for other relevant countries will be listed elsewhere.

**f). Came the Flood.....** Paul notes: "An extraordinary and localised day-long deluge on the southern Carmel on 31/12/98 led to serious flooding on the coastal plain with main roads between Tel Aviv and Haifa being closed by the roaring waters, The railway line was inundated by water at a bridge just south of Atlit. Traffic was severely disrupted for several hours with several trains cancelled and others crawling past the danger site at dead-slow speed. An extra Haifa-Tel Aviv train was provided at 20.30 to cater for people unable to travel by road.

**g). Head-Banging.** In the early hours of 8/2/99 there was a head-on collision between freight trains 301 and 306 at Rinatya crossing station (north of Lod on the old PR main line.) The crews of both trains were shaken up by the impact (25 kph), and taken to hospital for a check-up before being sent home later. The locos involved, Jumbos 608 and 613, were damaged and were taken to Haifa for repairs - 613 was back in service after four days, it took 8 days to repair 608 which had lost her buffers and suffered some generator damage. Several wagons were derailed. Until the wreckage had been cleared away later that day, other freights took the Ayalon route through Tel Aviv which is not normally used for freight traffic because of objections by the local inhabitants. (Though see below for longer-term re-routings during reconstruction works.) Cause of the Rinatya crash was quickly found to be signalman's error.

**h). Suicide ?** There have been several deaths in the Binyamina area over the years - including a recent one when a rail worker was trapped against a new retaining wall by a train. But on 22/11/98 there was an accident when a red Subaru car driven by a woman was hit by 108 on a Haifa-Tel Aviv train on the tracks near the Neve Yam junction. According to the Police this was a suicide.

**i). Jerusalem Line Prospects.** According to Amos Uzani, the General Manager of I.R., new tilting trains could reduce the journey time from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem to 50 minutes; he is hoping for budgetary approval to commence work on rebuilding the line, and reckons that work would take 18 months from the time it starts.

There are rumours, unsubstantiated as yet, that Uzani also plans a gradual improvement of the alignment of upper end of the Jerusalem line, by building a series of short tunnels to cut out some of the sharper curves. The idea that this project, presented as a series of low-budget mini-projects, may have a better chance of success than some of the high-flying schemes promised by politicians over the past thirty or more years. Similarly, a branch off the line near Kfar Habbad towards Ben Gurion airport would be a comparatively easy and low-cost alternative to an all-singing, all-dancing Sharon Region suburban network....

The line would also be provided with modern signalling, and the semaphores at Beth Shemesh and Jerusalem and any other intermediate loops retained would be replaced by more recent technology.

**j). Rosh HaAvin.** On Monday 8/3/99 a ceremony was held at Rosh HaAvin station to mark the commencement of work on a rail link between there and Tel Aviv. National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon took part. As a consequence of this scheme, the freight services that normally traverse the Tel Baruch - B'nei Berak - Rosh HaAvin - Lod line are being diverted along the Ayalon line from 8/3/99 for about 18 months.

**k). Tel Aviv Suburban.** Separate from the above scheme, the Government issued a tender for private investors to construct and operate a new rail link from Tel Aviv to Petach Tikvah and Kfar Saba. From the limited information available it is not clear to what extent this will be totally new line and to what extent the existing tracks in the region might be used - and how this would impact on the Rosh HaAvin route; nor how the new, private operators would "interface" with I.R. at Tel Aviv. Effectively this announcement presupposes the creation of a completely separate railway operation ! Airy promises about "11 minutes to Petah Tikvah and 29 minutes to Kfar Saba" are no substitute for a few hard facts.

From the "*Jerusalem Post*" of 8/3/99, p.17: "Ministry officials said the line was selected for the tender-experiment due to its pivotal location within the greater Tel Aviv nexus of chronic traffic jams and because of a host of planning and engineering circumstances which make its construction more opportune. The officials stressed that a successful launch of the new project would serve as a model for future railway tenders elsewhere." Well, they would, wouldn't they ? And are they expecting this line, even with its "pivotal role" in a gridlocked urban conurbation, to turn a profit ?

**l). Statistics.** The *Railway Gazette International*, April 1999, p 211 ("Passenger Portfolio") had the following comment, which to some extent adds to notes above:

"Israel Investment: Stations Head Spending

Rapid growth of rail passenger traffic in Israel is driving a number of station-based

property developments. IR carried 14% more passengers this January than in the previous year, although on some corridors the increase was up to 24%. Long-distance traffic using the new service from Ashdod to Haifa and Nahariyya rose by 42%.

This has made provision of better access to Tel Aviv's Savidor station a commercially attractive option for a shopping complex on the opposite side of the Ayalon river and urban motorway. The property developer is paying for an elevated walkway, now nearing completion, to provide an eastern access point for the station.

In Haifa, redevelopment of the Custom House station between East and Central stations as part of an office scheme would see platforms rafted over, with integral access to parking and government departments. On the outskirts of the city at Hof HaCarmel work is progressing on a new interchange station.

In both Tel Aviv and Beer Sheva new railway formation is taking shape. The suburban route from Tel Aviv to Kfar Sava involves upgrading and some new construction; much of the bed is now ready for track to be installed.

In Beer Sheva a spur is being constructed from the existing through route to Dimona to a new central station; earthworks are in advanced state.

Israel Railways received a licence to operate bus services last month. This will permit IR to introduce feeder routes, and surveys are now under way to decide where these should be established.

IR has received tenders for upgrading of the 3.5 km Hof-HaCarmel - Ha-Hoterim section of the main line south from Haifa. This was double-tracked a few years ago."

The reference to bus licenses reflects the outcome of a lengthy struggle with Egged to provide enhanced bus access to many IR stations. It remains to be seen whether a *modus vivendi* is now reached with this "most un-co-operative Co-operative in the world", or whether the IR really do hire buses to provide their own connections.

#### **44:5: ROLLING STOCK NEWS.**

**a). Bo-Bo No. "T44".** An article on the "family" of this loco in Sweden was published in "Today's Railways" No. 37, p. 27. The loco acquired by IR in 1989 remains a one-off, apparently the only loco of the type exported outside Sweden.

Thanks to Evyatar Reiter, who turned up one day (8/1/99) with a stencil and some paint, this loco now bears the number "131" on the cabside. This number remains unofficial ! The loco was observed shunting at Haifa Mizrach on 16/3/99. A letter on it by the Editor was published in "Today's Railways" No. 39.

**b). GM GA<sub>2</sub>JT42CW Co-Co No. 707** only entered service on 10/3/99; following arrival she had stood at Haifa and served as donor of spare parts for sister locos, but now IR has purchased the necessary spares direct from Spain.

**c). Withdrawals.** The influx of new locos has, as expected, led to a major change in IR's operating stock. (See 42:6:g). Some details are as yet unclear, but the following information can be given, valid to mid-March:

(i). All three SAFB Bo-Bos, 101, 102, 103, IR's first diesels, have now been withdrawn. They stand in the yard at the north-east end of Kishon Works. One is reserved for

the Museum (possibly 102, as 101 has a bent front-end); there is a rumour that another may also be preserved.

(ii). Esslingen 0-6-0D's 221, 225 and 227 are also now in the yard at Kishon, derelict. No locos of this type are now in operation.

(iii). The three G16 Co-Cos captured from Egyptian National Railways in 1967 and used by IR since then as 161, 162 & 163 (complete with Arabic instructions on the control columns !) have also been withdrawn and stand at Kishon.

(iv). Several of the earlier G12 Bo-Bos have also been withdrawn; 104, 107, 109, 114, 127 and 129 (the latter two also former ENR locos) have been taken out of service. It is expected that 110, 111 and 112 may follow soon.

(v). The solitary G8 Bo-Bo, No. 251 (also captured from Egypt) was sent to Kishon Yard on 9/9/98; it later spent a week on hire to "Rotem-Amfart", Negev Chemicals, working at Ashdod Port while Rotem's own loco No. 007 was under repair at their workshops at Tzefa. It was noted back in store in the yard on 18/3/99.

(vi) The three new shunting locos (see 42:6(b)) were, as at 20/3/99, still standing at the Haifa Diesel depot. One loco has apparently made one trial trip, otherwise they have remained here since delivery. The local nickname for these centre-cab Bo-Bos is "Yo-Yos" - "After all, we have Bo-Bos and Co-Cos !" They are numbered 261, 262 & 263.

The net result of these withdrawals is to eliminate some of the former variety of motive power ! The earlier, and the non-standard locos are no longer in use.

**d). Tilting Trains.** (cf. 42:6:d). In a Press Release dated 10/3/99 I.R. stated that it was ordering four tilting trainsets for a total of \$35M., with an option for further carriages, totalling \$180 M. Talgo, Fiat and Adtranz were competing for the order.

**e). Double-Deck Coaches.** (cf. 42:6:c). The same Press Release noted that GEC-Alstom had on 9/3/99 been awarded the contract to supply four sets of double-deck coaches for \$30M, within eighteen months. There is an option on a possible further 26 carriages or sets, also totalling \$180 M. These vehicles, according to Amos Uzani, are initially intended for strengthening IR's capacity and for the new suburban service Tel Aviv - Rosh HaAyin.

#### **44:6 GENERAL (AND PERSONAL) OBSERVATIONS ON ISRAEL RAILWAYS.**

A recent visit to Israel by the Editor (after a five-year gap) enabled several observations, as well as meetings with several readers of "Harakevet". These are so numerous and complex (and personal) that they are here given as a separate, critical, self-indulgent item. It is hoped that any criticisms will be perceived as constructive !

Firstly - the changes have been enormous and, from a railway point of view, almost all positive. As has been stated by others, the system now gives an impression of offering an efficient "European-style" service, rather than a quaint, historic and "Colonial" one. Fast, frequent trains, air-conditioned stock, comfortable seats, modern concrete stations, modern track and signalling, bright colours - a far cry from earlier "trundles" past Mandate-period buildings and signals in dusty 1950's coaches. Naturally, from an enthusiast's point of view (or from the viewpoint of someone who wants to lean out of a window or get

a shot of an historic item!) this is a little disappointing. But one should look forward. One gets the impression that passenger traffic on IR is here to stay. There is even a glossy in-train 24-page magazine "*Rak Rakevel*" ("Only the Train") distributed in the coaches. No. 1 is dated February 1999.

The freight scene has changed somewhat. In comparison with only a few years ago, Cement traffic has totally disappeared. (The line to Nesher at Ramle has been pulled up; that to Nesher at Tel Hanan has also disappeared, only a few relics being visible in the undergrowth.) The "Pazgas" traffic in bogie tank wagons to Gelilot Junction north of Tel Baruch has also ceased, the line at Gelilot has totally vanished under new roadworks for the northward Ayalon road extension (presumably this was what forced the closure) and a drainage channel on roughly the same alignment. The wagons now stand disused at Kishon and Tel Hanan.

Timber traffic is spasmodic, but several loaded wagons were seen being conveyed to Binyamina in late March; likewise gravel traffic to Herzliyya is spasmodic but still there. The ballast quarry at Binyamina remains in full operation. There appears to be no Salt traffic from Dimona any more. The west-side sidings at Kiryat HaPlada south of Akko, and the steelworks sidings on the east side, appear basically disused, apart from some grain wagons at a silo on the east side of the line.

What remains as revenue-earning traffic (apart from the coal shuttle to the power station) is basically Phosphates, Grain, some Acid in tanks, and Containers. Whilst this traffic is buoyant, one has the feeling of a narrow product base, and of a lot of cement, steelwork, dangerous fuels etc. all pounding the crowded roads.

The infrastructure looks a lot better, a lot better maintained. Welded rails, concrete sleepers, deep ballast. And yet..... Whilst it is wonderful to see how two tracks have been squeezed into the motorway reservation between Tel Aviv and Kfar Habbad (something I would have reckoned was impossible !), it is remarkable that the busiest section of the entire route - from Haifa Merkaz to Haifa Bat Galim - remained the last section to be doubled. (Apparently due to the need to avoid some old Byzantine grave tombs, plus demolition of some houses to create space for a new two-track formation rather than just widening the existing track. The old trackbed will probably become a road.) This has been a real signalman's and operator's headache, with the "Parvarim" suburban trains to fit onto the pattern of main-line passenger and freight services, and to be got into the bay platform at Bat Galim. Apparently freights can only use the centre track there, due to clearances, and current operating rules (due to be revised soon, thank goodness) demand that northbound trains use the right-hand track through the station, even though normal running on the double-track sections is left-hand !

The stations remain mostly poorly-sited. Access involves complex and slow bus-routes or crossing dangerous roadways. Bet Yehoshua is intended to be a Park-and-Ride station, but it seems that Herzliyya is too, if only because it appears to be in the only part of Herzliyya that is not built-up. The new station at Hof Carmel will be large and complex - though apparently, from looking at the concrete shell, lacking escalators and lifts for the disabled and burdened - but it is actually situated well away from the Congress and Shopping Centres, being near the beach and a large empty space that may or may not become the new Egged Bus Station. Until it does, access will be dismal. Apparently there have



been hefty discussions with Egged as I.R. is now considering, or actually planning, to introduce its own bus feeder services to some stations to break the Egged monopoly. This may help. At Haifa Bat Galim the subway from 'Egged' to the railway station is dingy and dark, whereas the railways have cleaned up their section enormously - bright tiling, new access barriers and electronic departure boards.

Ah yes - the departure boards. A triumph of modern technology and old-fashioned thinking. Identical to those in use on some Egged bus stations, they are dark red liquid crystal displays on a darker red background; bilingual (Hebrew / English) - which is good. But they show only the final destination of a train, not its stopping pattern ! Compared with the destination blinds in Germany or Holland, they are remarkably unhelpful. Passengers need to know where a train is going, where it is stopping, sometimes where to change for another service, and what time they might arrive. Timetables are displayed on stations and even in the vestibules of coaches - but one has to be timetable-literate and of good eyesight to be able to read them. A simple "Departures Sheet" as used to be displayed on every British Rail station would be much more helpful.

The new access barriers installed at Tel Aviv Merkaz, Hashalom, Haifa Merkaz, Bat Galim etc. allow the passenger to pass through by inserting a magnetically-coded ticket - as in many urban railways. A fine idea, in theory. But in Israel a remarkable number of passengers are carrying heavy kitbags and dangling weapons ! Or are pushing buggies ! And then the lack of an alternative becomes a real problem - or, instead, an access gate is deliberately left unlocked and wide open, thus defeating the object of the rest of the barriers ! Presumably the new footbridge linking Tel Aviv Merkaz (also known as Arlosoroff and as Savidor) with a shopping centre to the east will also have such barriers; at Hashalom station there is also direct access from a shopping centre, and a lady has to sit there all day to issue the free tickets which soldiers have to pass through the barriers to validate their free rides.

The new timetable introduced from 20/3/99 (and reviewed elsewhere) is only a partial step forward, inasmuch as passenger services in the south remain sparse indeed. To some extent this reflects the infrastructure problems - the Jerusalem line closed for rebuilding, Lod station not yet complete, the doubling south of Lod towards Ashdod not even started, the line from Lod via Ramle and Naan to Beersheba still being refurbished, the extension from Beersheba to the town centre bus station still at the planning stage, the additional stations in the Ayalon not yet constructed.... In addition there are still extensive works on building the southbound platform at Athlit, and the replacement of the Yarkon bridge involves single-line working from Tel Baruch with the southbound line slewed over to the northbound formation for a while. (See 42:4:g). Another headache for planners and operators !

The situation should improve markedly as these projects come "on stream", though one wonders why it was necessary to introduce a complete new timetable now and not wait a couple of months until at least some of the "pinch-points" had been eased. And, of course, for the time being the freight traffic has to be superimposed on the Ayalon line as well while the old line is being rebuilt.

Verdict ? Public transport in Israel remains something for the physically-fit and mentally-alert. The railways have made great improvements, with more in the pipeline, but some detailed planning and co-ordination could help a great deal.

## 44:7. THE NEW I.R. TIMETABLE.

From 20/3/99 "and until further notice" a new timetable came into effect, as noted elsewhere. A small pocket-sized booklet is available for 1 NIS. Counting the outside cover, there are 36 pages, but two form the cover (a picture of a train formed of four IC3 units), two are for Notes, one lists useful phone numbers, one is a list of contents (Hebrew/English), three are an Introduction (Hebrew only), one is an advert for the Railway Museum, two are General Information (Hebrew only), one an advert for Kol Yisrael Radio and one an advert for the "Merkaz Azrieli" shopping mall (to be connected soon to Tel Aviv Merkaz station); the centre two pages form a diagram of the new services, divided into four main routes designated by colours.

So only pages 8-17 for the southbound, and 20-29 for the northbound services comprise actual Tables, with pp. 16-17 and 28-29 being devoted to the special Tables for Fridays (when services end early) and Saturday evenings (when the Sabbath has ended.)

However, there are some substantial changes, hopefully the precursor to even more in the next timetable. They can be summarised as follows:

a). The "main line" (green line) extends Nahariyya - Tel Aviv Hashalom.

Many of these trains now run non-stop from Binyamina to Tel Aviv Merkaz. Connections to stopping services are made at Binyamina rather than Netanya as before, and these are indicated in the tables by little arrows.

b). The "red line" comprises the Haifa Bay suburban services, from Kiryat Motzkin to Hof Carmel.

c). The "Blue line" covers Tel Aviv suburban services, essentially stopping trains from Binyamina (!) through to Ashdod.

d). The "Yellow line" is the route to the Negev - Tel Aviv Merkaz to Beer Sheva.

Despite this separation in the map, the Tables combine all services heading either northbound or southbound. This makes connections clearer.

The opportunity to introduce a full "regular interval" or "clockface" timetable has not been taken. For example, trains leave Nahariyya at 05.23, 06.21, 06.54, 07.23, 08.21, 09.23, 10.21, 11.23 and so on - the last southbound service leaves Nahariyya at 20.21. There are now 17 trains from Nahariyya - essentially an hourly service. Many, but not all trains are shown as having separate arrival and departure times at Haifa Bat Galim - not really necessary since these are through trains halting for two minutes, although use is made of this space to indicate onward connections from some arriving suburban services.

The service from Haifa to Tel Aviv has departures at 05.25, 05.52, 06.00, 06.15, 06.25, 07.00, 07.25, 08.00, 08.25, 09.00, 09.25, 10.00, 11.00, 12.00, 12.25, 13.00, 13.35, 14.00, 14.25, 15.00, 15.25, 16.00, 16.25, 17.00, 17.25, 18.00, 18.25, 19.00, 19.25, 20.00, & 21.00. Some of these start back from Nahariyya, from Kiryat Motzkin or even from Kishon! The later trains indicate an awareness that some people want to travel to Tel Aviv in the evenings - until now southbound services ended earlier, partly to allow the evening freight trains to run. (Incidentally, Israel is a country where - on the whole - people get up very early and go to bed very early, in contrast with - say - Berlin! The timetables have always reflected this, and also demonstrate a lull in the early afternoon. Fridays are rapidly becoming, for the professional classes at least, a part of a two-day weekend.)

The Haifa suburban services comprise two services an hour which are so spaced so that, with the Nahariyya service as well, they form a 20-minute interval shuttle from Kiryat Motzkin. They do not run at all on Fridays, nor on Fridays do trains get to Ashdod or Beersheba. However, on Saturday nights there are two trains (dep. 19.19 and 21.19) from Nahariyya south all the way through to Rehovot, arr. 21.43 and 23.43 respectively.

The "Tel Aviv suburban" line has departures from Binyamina on an even-interval pattern, every 30 minutes from 06.36 to 19.36 (only hourly from 10.36 to 14.36), then a final working at 21.36. Connections from southbound expresses vary from 6 to 10 minutes. Of the 24 trains, 22 carry on as far as Lod, 18 work through to Rehovot and 3 as far as Ashdod; there are also a few peak-hour short additional workings from Netanya to Tel Aviv. None of these work on Fridays.

The services to and from Ashdod are clearly aimed at commuters travelling into Tel Aviv in the mornings and back in the evenings, with three trains each way. Beer Sheva is served only by a 17.03 from Tel Aviv (taking 1 hr. 26 minutes), plus an additional 08.37 on Sundays (through from Haifa) and an additional 14.40 on Thursdays (taking 1 hr. 18 mins.) One can only assume there will be drastic changes here when the rebuilding works and the extension to the Central Bus Station in Beer Sheba are completed.

The northbound services are essentially a mirror image - a single 06.40 departure from Beer Sheba (plus 13.06 SuO, & 16.42 ThuO.) Last northbound train leaves Tel Aviv Hashalom 21.55, arriving Haifa 23.12; last train to Nahariya is 18.54, arriving 20.43.

It remains to be seen how this timetable works out in practice, bearing in mind the current engineering and signalling works and doubling still under way, the effects of freight traffic, and the occasional teething troubles still experienced with the new push-pull stock and locos. The "shoulders" have been extended much later into the evenings, thus increasing conflict with freight movements. Southbound suburban departures from Binyamina will presumably use the new island platform outer face, which will mean crossing the northbound lines. We await reports !

#### **44:8: OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.**

**a). PALESTINE.** Well, it's a tendentious title, but it's less unwieldy than "Palestinian Autonomous Territories". Dr. Reinhard Dietrich sent a note from the "*Hanauer Anzeiger*", a German newspaper, of 23/11/98, concerning a visit to Yassir Arafat by Herr Hans Eichel (SPD), the Minister-President of the 'Land' of Hesse and then Acting-President of the Bundesrat. (This is the second Chamber of the German Federal Parliament, and the post of Acting-President is held for six-months on a rotating basis between the Minister-Presidents of the various States; an interesting potential parallel, inasmuch as each 'Land' is a semi-autonomous unit within the Federal Republic.) The visit (20-23/11/98) was held in order to encourage greater co-operation between German industry and the Palestinians - one of the participants of the official delegation was apparently Wolfgang Tölsner of ADTranz - and at one of the meetings Herr Eichel apparently proposed a concept "already prepared by the Germans" for the construction of a railway link between Gaza and Hebron.

It is not clear how detailed and serious this proposal is. Of course, the Deutsche Reichsbahn acquired a great deal of experience of running "transit trains" through sealed-off areas between West Germany and Berlin !

**b). IRAQ.** I asked a journalist friend who was covering the recent Middle East/Gulf crisis to keep an eye out for railway information. I shall not name him here, but he wrote:

“I experienced two nights of bombardment in Baghdad, but I had spies and ‘guides’ from the Information Ministry breathing down my neck all the time, so I only managed to drive by the Central Station.

From the road there was no sign of bomb damage, but at least ten passenger carriages were standing in the sidings heavily damaged by fire. Many more seemed to lack windows. Everything seemed closed, and there was no sign of regular traffic.”

**c). TURKEY.**

**(i). Izmir Light Rail.** According to “*Railway Gazette International*” 1/99, p. 13, “Adtranz, Alstom and Bombardier were among 21 companies seeking to prequalify by Dec. 18 [1998] for the second phase of the Izmir light rail system, comprising a 3.2km. route from Bornova Hospital to Bornova Centre and a 4.8 km. line from Ucyol to Fahrettin Altay.”

**(ii). Istanbul Metro.** From the same source: “Prequalification bids were invited by Dec. 22 for the supply, assembly and commissioning of electrical and mechanical equipment for the Yenikapi - Taksim route of the Istanbul metro.”

**(iii). Isparta Light Rail.** Also from the same source: “The Turkish municipality of Isparta is expected to announce plans for a light rail network in the next few months. Formal approval is being sought following a feasibility study by Eser, Tractebel and Transurb which recommended an initial 11.6 km. route costed at \$US 135M.”

**(iv.) Ankara Railway Museum.** Hans-Henrik Landsvig visited Ankara and discovered the Railway Museum - with eleven locos of American, British, German and Swedish manufacture. Directions - an 0-6-0T is in the square in front of the main station; then walk through the booking hall, turn right and go past the tunnel to a small building with the museum. Kemal Atatürk’s saloon coach (built by Linke Hofmann in Breslau in 1935) is behind this house. To reach the other ten steam engines go through the tunnel, turn left up the first staircase after the suburban platform into Celal Bayar Bulvari, and the place is right in front of you. It is open both mornings and afternoons, but not Sundays, Mondays and Holidays.

A “scoop” was a large oval number-plate from a locomotive built by Baldwin Locomotive Works in “Philadelphie” [sic] in 1890 as No. 11011; the plate further informs that the engine was No. 1 belonging to the “Chemin de Fer Ottoman de Jaffa a Jerusalem et Prolongs.” It is unclear how this plate ended up at Ankara along with so many others - Cotterell, on p. 31 notes that the original J-J locos were left behind by the Turks, and that in 1918 No. 1 “has only the wheels, the framework and the boiler are unusable and the tender is broken.” Paul also suggests that this plate may be a replica - apparently at least two replica plates were cast by Ilan Falkov of the Railway Museum in Haifa, though details are obscure.

**(v). Georgian Delays.** According to “*Fahrplancenter News*” No. 29, p.30, the Turkish Government has once more delayed issuing the contract for construction of the new line

from Kars to Vale in Georgia; this follows the failure of any organisation or consortium declaring an interest in constructing the Georgian section. The Government of Georgia does apparently desire this international link, but lacks the financial resources to support it.

**(vi). Internal Service Improvements.** From the same source: The TCDD has now placed new air-conditioned coaches in service between Istanbul (Haydarpasa) and Ankara; the timings of the best trains (e.g. the Fatih and the Bashkent Express) have been reduced by up to 30 minutes.

**(vii). Internal Service Reductions.** Also from "*Fahrplancenter News*": The local services in the south-east of Turkey have been severely pruned; almost all rail passenger traffic has been given up east of Adana, including the links around Gaziantep to Narli. For the present the only service is the daily train from Gaziantep to Nusaybin along the legendary "Bagdadbahn", which is a political issue and cannot therefore be so easily withdrawn. The line follows the Syrian border closely for a distance, in an area inhabited by Kurds, and this train forms the sole means of regular communication, supplemented only by a postal train and a local train from Gaziantep to Karkemis. The train is accompanied by soldiers who check each passenger's baggage; apparently the TCDD trains here are at least clean and punctual. There is a total ban on photography on the Turkish section of this line. East of Nusaybin station the Bagdadbahn is closed and derelict, and no traffic through to Syria is possible. The branch Senyurt - Mardin has been completely closed; it has not yet been dismantled, but a return to service seems unlikely.

#### **d). JORDAN.**

**(i). Amman Light Rail.** From "*R.G.I.*" 1/99, p. 13: "A total of 34 companies and consortia have expressed interest in the concessions to build and operate the proposed Amman - Zarqa light rail network. Formal requests for technical and financial proposals were sent out in mid-November [1998] by the Transport Ministry, which will hold a pre-bidding conference this month before offers are submitted in February."

**(ii). Aqaba Line Privatisation.** From "*R.G.I.*" 1/99, p.7: "On November 23 Wisconsin Central Transportation Corp. revealed that its international business unit had been selected as preferred bidder for a 25-year concession to operate the 283km. 1.050mm gauge Aqaba Railway in Jordan. WCI is part of a consortium including Raytheon and local Jordanian investors. The decision follows analysis of financial proposals from four short-listed consortia which were to be submitted by November 12.

Following its bid of 20M dinars, the WCI/Raytheon consortium will negotiate final terms with the government of Jordan. WCTC plans to take a 33% stake in the operating company, investing US\$ 9M a year for the first two years. The consortium must also agree a new transport contract with the Aqaba Railway's principal customer, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Co., which ships phosphate, sulphur and phosphoric acid.

As part of the package, the concessionaire will be responsible for financing, building and operating a 22km. extension to serve a new phosphate mine at El Shidiya, and another of 16 km. to the Wadi Il industrial complex near Aqaba. Construction of the exten-

sions at a cost of US\$ 120M is expected to boost ARC traffic from around 3 million tonnes a year to 10 million by 2002.

Under the terms of the concession, the government will retain ownership of the ARC infrastructure and fixed assets, but the 21 diesel locos and 267 wagons will be transferred to the concessionaire, who will be responsible for fleet renewals. The government is being advised on privatisation by CPCS Transcom of Canada.”

#### **e). SAUDI ARABIA.**

From “*R.G.I.*” 1/99. p.13: “Construction of two private-sector lines in Saudi Arabia is recommended by a feasibility study for the Ministry of Communications. A 1,200 km. east-west corridor would link the Red Sea port of Jeddah and the Gulf city of Jubail, and the other would serve the northern phosphate mining region at Al Jalamid near the Iraq/Jordan border.

#### **f). SYRIA.**

From “*Fahrplancenter News*” 29, p. 32: In many stations along the route from Halab to El Qamishli complete rakes of passenger coaches are standing disused, formed mainly of coaches built in the DDR and in reasonable condition. The bus competition makes rail transport relatively unpopular.

#### **g). IRAN.**

According to “*Today's Railways*” No. 39, p. 47, the Romanian State Railways (CFR) are seeking to dispose of some surplus Class 60 / 62 diesel electric locos, built by Electroputere of Craiova under license from Sulzer of Switzerland. “These have now been offered for sale to Iran. if they are sold, the locos would need to be refurbished as most of the dumped locos have been cannibalised for spares. It remains to be seen if the sale will actually take place, but CFR is in desperate need of foreign exchange.”

#### **h). EGYPT.** From *R.G.I.* 4/98, p.196:

“Plans are being drawn up for a rail network to serve the new city of Borg El Arab in Egypt. Located 55km west of Alexandria, it is expected to reach a population of 510, 000 by next year.”

### **44:9: NOTES AND COMMENTS.**

**a). Private Halts.** Paul Cotterell writes: “I heard via an indirect route that for many years many IR trains made an unofficial stop at Athlit, at the behest of Member of Knesset Pesach Gruber who lived there. Is this true ? I vaguely recall a similar tale concerning a senior railway official who had trains make special stops at Binyamina. These ‘private arrangements’ certainly occurred on several railway companies in Britain. Does anyone have more details of this aspect of “operating convenience” ?”

The Editor went to his archive and came up with a news item from the “*Jerusalem Post*” for 14/11/79: “In a surprise move in the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday, the Likud’s trainhopping MK Pessah Grupper [sic. - Hebrew transliterations are always fallible. Ed.] blocked a standard Treasury and Transport Ministry request for a 25 per cent increase in rail freight charges, because he wants trains to stop at more stations.

The request had been expected to move smoothly and routinely though the committee. But Grupper, who claims that train drivers stop for him at Atlit, where he lives, despite the fact that it is not a scheduled station on the route, exercised his right to demand a faction debate on it. Grupper, who says he is on excellent terms with the engine-drivers, said he would ask the Likud faction to examine the request for a tariff increase and at the same time to investigate the causes of Israel Railways' deficit. He demanded that Israel Railways look into the possibilities of making stops at a larger number of stations on its passenger route.

The Transport Ministry wants the freight increase because of the higher wage and fuel costs.

Grupper told the 'Jerusalem Post' that he will shortly propose to the committee that the railways offer a fare discount to large families. Since the trains frequently travel empty, he said, there is no reason why they should not cater more for people of limited means."

So - the story is true, and the context is of a politician actually seeking to increase services and encourage a form of "Family Railcard" !

**b). Boom !** Paul writes: "In past issues of Harakevet I have queried the identity of the 8F 2-8-0 which exploded at Habonim, south of Atlit, back in the early 1950's. This was 70410. Its identity was finally revealed by the discovery of an unnumbered file marked "SECRET", which contains the accident enquiry report. I have not yet trawled through all the details, but 70410 exploded because of stay bolt problems in the firebox - nothing very unusual in that. Still missing is the actual date of the explosion; the file appears to contain only the enquiry findings, not the actual accident report which would include such immediate details.

**c). Turkish Money.** On 42:12(k) (& 41.11(a): Bill Alborough writes that the Turkish Lire is currently (Jan. 1999) 556,000 to £1 Sterling; therefore 1 Million is under £2.

**d).** On p.51 the photo of semi-derelict diesels at Ma'an is from John Alexander. Apologies for the name being omitted from the caption.

**e).** Klaus Matzka is intrigued by the reference to the "cable car and funicular at Jounieh" on p. 19 of 42/3 - Hefti's famous book on "Standseilbahnen" refers only to a funicular, under reference 265.01. Is there any more information on either of these systems ?

**f).** On 42:4(m) - Uri Ben-Rehav notes that the new platforms at Kfar Habad are 450m. long ! This is possibly a new "standard length" for IR stations, to allow for 8-coach push-pull or 9-car IC3 trains.

**g).** On 42:7, the Israel Railway Enthusiasts Society. Hans Kohut writes that he is not the last survivor of the former society - Aharon Gazit (formerly Goldberg) joined in 1963, and there could be others too, but now of unknown whereabouts. This former Society was not just of and for enthusiasts, for among the first members were the Minister of Transport (Bar-Yehuda); the Minister of Development (Almogi); S. Abramov M.K., of the General

Zionists Party; Prof. Dr. Kurt Nevratsky; and J. Hardy the former General Manager of the Railways. Relations with the Railways management was always close, (the opening meeting in 1963 was held in a special coach in a special train provided by the I.R., its then-G.M. Mr. Savidor and Chief Press Relations Officer Mr. Gabrieli.) But, after 30 years or so, with Hans reaching 75, it seemed time to make changes. Hans asked Aharon Gazit to enquire about forming an "Amutah" or legally-recognised non-profit Society to encourage rail transport, and the legal firm of Eliaz-Dannus-Ambar was approached. Attempts lasted from 25/8/94 to 12/2/95, during which time six letters were despatched, after which the efforts collapsed. Brief mention of this unsuccessful move was made in 28:26.

Nevertheless, it is clear that Israel Railways does need some sort of supporting and lobbying association, and it is to be hoped that the new group can provide the essential moral support. The new "Marketing Division" under Avi Chefetz might, for example, be able to ensure wider distribution of timetables.

**h). On 42:12(n). The life and work of Paul Gaudin in Turkey.** Andy Wilson writes: "The 'chemin de fer Amidie-Hedjah' must be the Hedjaz Railway. This was often referred to as the Hamidiye Hejaz Railway, in recognition of the personal sponsorship of it by Sultan Abd al-Hamid II. There are some problems with the dates quoted for a "constructeur" because the during the period mentioned, the only line constructions on the Smyrna Cas-saba Railway were the Alesehir-Afyon line completed in 1897 and the Soma-Bandirma line built between 1910 and 1912. The gap is largely filled with the Hejaz Railway under construction between 1900 and 1908, but the period between 1912 and 1921 is unexplained. Maybe a typo? A French person would hardly have been working in the Ottoman empire during the war period.

Taking up my point about Abd al-Hamid's strong personal interest in the HR project, I think this was the real reason for curtailing construction at Medina in 1908, because the Young Turks had just taken over the government and left him in a rather powerless position. The new brooms had to be seen to be doing something and the HR was an obvious target for political action. To be sure, there was opposition locally from those whose interests were threatened by the improved capability of the Ottoman government in the Hejaz region, but this was nothing new and I doubt whether this was the real reason for postponing construction of the HR beyond Medina."

**i). On 42:21, "Hedjaz Propaganda".** Andy Wilson notes: "The remark in the heading paragraph about "arabic letters" is odd. The language is Arabic and so of course it is written in the appropriate alphabet. As for the Young Turks wanting to substitute the Roman alphabet instead of the arabic alphabet for writing Turkish, some of them may have had ideas in this direction but it did not happen until the Turkish republic. The writer of "Eternal Happiness" was clearly an enthusiast for the benefits of rail communications but some of his ideas are excessively optimistic. Was the Damascus - Palmyra-Baghdad rail link a serious proposal at the time? I doubt it, although all sorts of fanciful ideas had been floated before the HR project got under way. I get the impression that the writer had recently made the pilgrimage and was still smarting from having been ripped off by the local caravan operators."



Incidentally: The book noted in 42:21 incorporates first the Arabic text and then the English translation and notes. The full title is:

“The Hejaz Railway and Muslim Pilgrimage: A Case of Ottoman Political Propaganda”, by Prof. Jacob M. Landau, pub. Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1971, ISBN 08143 1422 8.

**j). Israel Railways Stations and Halts.** There have been some recent closures; Zikhron Yaakov is no longer served by trains - traffic earlier sufficed to justify a couple of trains in each direction halting there; the road access is poor, and the local Council showed no interest in providing a bus link, so IR withdrew passenger facilities from 19/7/97.

From the same date the tiny halts at Bustan HaGalil and Shavvei Tziyon also “closed”. The former bus-shelter halt at Nahariyya Darom has totally vanished (but when?). Trains no longer stop at Shefayim or Kfar Vitkin.

This reminds one that other halts, such as Yavne (see 41:7(a)) or Ramle West, have also appeared briefly in the timetable and then been obliterated. One wonders what market research ever went into locating and creating them in the first place. Jerusalem Zoo lost its services with the closure of the line. Paul Cotterell recalls that in the 1970's trains would stop on request at a variety of obscure crossings such as “Neveh Yam” near Atlit. Clearly there is scope for research into “Vanished Stations”.

Beer Yakov currently comprises a one-coach-length halt on the east side of the line, just north of the level crossing for the road to Netzer Sereni; it will shortly be replaced (work was noticed in March 1999) by a new station some 200 m. south of the level crossing, with two longer, modern concrete platforms and a pedestrian subway as well as road underpass.

Rehovot has been rebuilt, with a new platform and shelter on the “main line” facing a modernised set of buildings on the old platform on the loop, which ends at a short headshunt and buffer stops near the level crossing. Apparently “Phase 2” of the scheme here will allow for two more loops (necessary to provide capacity for through freight traffic) and another platform - “when budgets permit”. The old 1930's citrus sheds have been demolished to make way for car-parking spaces.

Naan was not visited on this trip, but I understand that the hut formed of half a former PR coach, and painted red and blue, which stood next to the signal box, has now been demolished.

The station building at Jerusalem has now been turned into “HaRetzif” kosher dairy restaurant, open “from 10am until after midnight”; this name means “The Platform”. The former buffet in the old goods shed has been closed. During a visit in March I was told that the station area has been thoroughly cleaned and weeded recently. the signal box has been vandalised, the upper level having many broken windows and a jammed door, the frame/rodding level in the basement full of torn magazines and general dreck. If and when the line is reopened, however, it appears that modern signalling will be used, and the old semaphores will be eliminated. The level crossing at Derech Beit Lechem has the base pedestals for two new American-type barriers installed next to the remains of the 1920's mechanisms which have now lost their drooping booms. So no longer will it be necessary for an old chap to walk down twice a day and sit in the little hut...

In the goods yard at Jerusalem the old grain silo and the former gantry for moving containers have totally vanished, as has the old 35Aleph bogie van which, covered in graffiti, stood for years by the farther buffer stop. Some of the tracks have become half-obiterated with gravel or clutter, but have not been lifted. The headshunt and tracks to the Printing Works are becoming severely overgrown.

In the new timetable, "Kishon" appears, served by one train each way to the "Technical School" there. In practice, the former low platform / shelter near the level crossing to the main Works entrance has been obliterated - a surprising development, since the area around the level crossing now includes what appears to be an extensive Commercial centre. Instead, the few relevant trains simply halt on the main line by Kishon signal box, where swarms of young students, mostly military, climb up from the ballast. It is not clear whether workers at the Railway Workshops are also able to commute by train to their workplace.

Lod is undergoing a major renovation but, so far as could be observed during the middle of the works, essentially retaining its former layout. The line from the Tel Aviv direction is now, of course, double track; both signal boxes at north and south ends have been demolished. A couple of semaphores remain, out of use - also two in the old Loco/P-Way Yard. Track between the two island platforms was lifted and new ballast had been spread during a visit on 17/3/99; Plat. 4 was used to terminate the train from Haifa which would technically (on the then-current timetable) have continued to Jerusalem - the loco unhooked, left the coaches blocking this through line, ran forward over the point to the solitary southbound line at present, and reversed into the depot; Plat. 1 has had the track slewed away from the platform about halfway along its length, so that the service to / from Rehovot uses the northern half only, then runs parallel to but not adjacent to the southern part of the platform. But this may be a temporary measure. Some of the freight loops were also being relaid. South of the station all tracks converged into one for about 200m., then the junction for Ramle / Rehovot appeared temporary. There is a long-term aim to double the track to Rehovot and as far as Ashdod. The subway to Plats. 3/4 is now widened again - the air-raid protection wall having (at last !) been removed.

Inside the Lod loco depot, the westernmost section of the "old" steam shed is having lengthy inspection-pits built into the tracks, presumably for servicing IC3 units used on the southern-area suburban services.

Although the Editor did not manage to visit these, Benny Haspel informs us that work is well advanced at Kiryat Gat with two platforms under construction; the extension to the Bus Station at Beer Sheba involves a loop from Ramta with a bridge crossing the Hebron Road, thus involving heavy engineering works and a planned completion in 2000.

Benny adds that work on Tel Aviv HaHaganah (on the Ayalon line, with connections to the Tel Aviv Central Bus Station) should also start in 1999; and that he is on the committee advising on siting and design of the planned new Tel Aviv University Station which will be at the junction for the Haifa and Kfar Saba lines, will involve a passenger subway and (eventually) some form of automated access up the hill to the university itself, though initially there will be a bus shuttle. Opening is planned for June 2000.

## 44:10. HEDJAZ NOTES AND COMMENTS.

a). Bill Alborough has sent several comments on the reports in issue 42/3, so many that they deserve a separate heading:

(i). The route Al Mahatta - Zerqa is still very much active.

(ii). The International Trains Amman - Damascus still run weekly, Mondays only; however, the trains no longer run through, but instead terminate at Dera'a, where passengers need to transfer to another set of carriages. This means that only one return trip Amman - Dera'a is now necessary, since the same set of coaches can return on the same day; it also ensures that Jordan gets its own carriages back in the condition in which they left ! (Apparently, Damascus has been known to swap coaches for the return working....)

(iii): A correction to issue 42, p. 18, line 6: It was No. 91 that went to Zebdani, not the tour group, who were in Lebanon. One passenger who stayed behind in Syria got a photo of this - it was extremely unusual for a tender loco to traverse the Serghaya branch - TEFS had nothing to do with this arrangement, the loco was allocated by HSR.

(iv): The top tunnel No. 7 was especially cleared for TEFS, and the whole train (the loco, four coaches and Fourgon) went inside several times over the two days (allowing for morning and afternoon photo angles), bursting forth for the benefit of photographers. Photography on the Qatana branch was allowed at certain points - e.g. the bucket-chain re-watering stop referred to on pages 18, 20.

(v): The brakes on loco no. 61 were O.K. for TEFS !

(vi): This bit is a bit delicate - the Editor does not want to get mixed into partisan politics; it is clear that there is an unhappy relationship between TEFS and some other organisations, including the Continental Railway Circle (there is a personal dispute going back some 25 years) and the Locomotive Club of Great Britain. But - The vague references in the "C.R.J." to "another tour" are understood to have been the LCGB Hedjaz tour of April 1998, the Hedjaz staff having also mistranslated "Loco" in faxes from "The Loco Club" as meaning "Crazy", as in Spanish !

(vii): on p. 20: the term "B.A.F." should actually be "A.B.F." and stands for (delicate readers please close your eyes at this point) "Arab Buggeration Factor" - Bill's term for describing the way things go wrong or get delayed or lost..... On the other hand, he maintains that acting like a "Great White Sahib" will only make things worse, not better, and threaten relationships for future tours as well. For example, the staff at Cadem were very upset at people scratching their derelict locos to glean more information, without asking first !

Incidentally - we hear that Bill has not been in the best of health recently, and wish him well.

(b). In "C.R.J." No. 117, Spring 1999, p.399 is another report on the Serghaya line: "The steam tourist train from Damascus to Serghaya is reported to run daily from April to August, and Friday/Sunday Only the rest of the year, with departure time varying between 8.00 and 10.00. For photographers, October is probably the best month, with lower sun than in the summer, and before the onset of winter clouds. On Friday 23/10/98 the train departed at 9.00 and was headed by 2-6-0T No. 755. The five coaches were well loaded but not full, and the loco performed excellently, running non-stop to Ain Fidje, where

water was taken and one coach detached. Tequieh, at the northern end of the steepest section in the gorge, and Zebedani were the only further stops, water being taken at each. Serghaya was reached at 12.00. After the loco had been turned and watered, the return journey commenced at 13.45. On Sunday, 25/10/98, the train was quoted to leave Damascus at 8.00, but the empty stock did not arrive until 9.15, and departure was at 10.00 ! The train of four coaches, two of which were detached at Ain Fidje, was less well patronised than on the Friday. Motive power was 0-6-2T 805, which required some maintenance on the way, so it was nearly 14.00 when the train reached Serghaya. Return departure was at 14.30. It is worth recording that the driver on the Sunday was Mr. Aziz el-Kassem, who was trained to drive diesels in Germany in the 1960's and who was known to our German reporter from a visit to Dera'a in 1985. With the closure of his employment at Dera'a, he now commutes daily to Cadem where, although now aged over 70, he is still in charge of the steam locos."

(c). **Another Tour.** The DGEG, fresh from its success with the Israel Railways Tour, is also now advertising a trip to the Hedjaz, 27/10-07/11/99; details and bookings via:  
DGEG, Referat Studienreise, Postfach 10-20-45, D-47410 Moers.  
Fax: (+49)-2841-56012.

(d). Uwe Pietruck has noted that the "*National Geographic*" in its February 1999 issue has a photo of "HR loco 151", with a caption: "This train stands north of Kilometre 1121, where Lawrence mined the railway in early April 1917. Of about 45 locomotives which operated on the railway, at least 17 are estimated to have been put out of action by Lawrence."

Uwe reckons that, when comparison is made with the photo in "Die Hedschas-Bahn" by Dieter Noll, Bickel & v. Denffer, which identifies the remains between Al Mudarra and Hattiya as 2-8-0 No. 151 of 1912, or the photos of HR 153 and 156 in Turret's "Hedjaz Railway", that the picture is in fact printed "mirrored", since the smokebox door should open to the right.

## 44:11. ISRAEL RAILWAY ENTHUSIASTS SOCIETY.

"Pasim", "Rails", is the name of a new "Amutah" or Non-Profit Society for those supporting Israel Railways

Zvi Rechnitz (Zvika) organised the first "Pasim" society tour on Dec. 4th. Meeting at Kfar Habad station, participants travelled by car around the Lod area in order to view new developments.

I am advised that a new Web Site for this organisation can now be found on the Internet at < <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Atlantis/7250> > It currently contains, amongst other things, some recent pictures by Yaron Dozetas, maps and reports.

An initial mailing list of "Pasim" members already totals 60.

One activity planned was an initial railtour during the Pesach holidays, from Haifa via Hadera and Tel Aviv to Lod (visit), Na'an (visit), Kiryat Gat (visit), Beersheba for a tour to former relics in the region, then back to Haifa. Alas, this was cancelled, but several members were able to join a special train from Tel Aviv to Rosh HaAyin on 22/3/99 organised

by the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.

It is hoped to carry regular reports on activities; and there are rumours of a regular Internet Newsletter. "Harakevet" welcomes anything which increases interest and knowledge in this subject !

Contact Address is: "Pasim", P.O. Box. 39187, 61391 Tel Aviv.

## 44:12. THE D.G.E.G. ISRAEL RAILWAY TOUR.

The group, 15 strong, spent a week exploring the Israel Railways system, including a road tour of the Valley Line (Rakevet HaEmek), the Jerusalem line by road, and a visit to Ashdod Port. The tour to the Negev on Nov. 3 used loco 607, power coach 637 (air-conditioning is very necessary in this region !) and coaches 96 and 95 - the former SNCF stainless-steel vehicles, chosen because they are the only ones with windows that open sufficiently to enable one to lean out ! Sybil Ehrlich joined the group for this day and reports:



**(PHOTO 1: The D.G.E.G. Tour train in the Negev, 3/11/98. (Photo: Sybil Ehrlich.)**

"The day started with the participants exploring the remains of the Turkish railway station, about 200 m. from the Beit Yatziv Guest House; after breakfast a bus was laid on for transport to Beer Sheva IR station, where the train was waiting; it left at 09.03, stopped at Nevatim for photos, and arrived Dimona at 09.45. In the loco shed were 121, 161, 115, 605 and new immigrant 702. Unfortunately 702 could not be moved out to be photographed, because there were no drivers qualified to take it out ! (It was towed to Dimona, but

they were not willing to tow it out of the shed.) While we were at Dimona loco 612 arrived with a long train of phosphate wagons. We also saw 610 (in green livery) and 611 (red and blue) double-heading a northbound mineral train.

The next photo stop was at a bridge, grid reference 1530-0396, and another stop was made at the longest bridge on IR, grid reference 1436-0252 - 180 m. long, 30 m. high at the centre. At Nahal Tzin we saw a filthy 613 and 614, as well as the automated shunter. We then returned to the junction with the Tzefa branch, where we were lucky to see a double-headed train in the distance on its way to Tzefa. Our train traversed the line to Tzefa, then back all the way to Tel Aviv Hashalom; we waited a half hour at Lod to let a southbound IC3 go past. A fantastic day."

A fuller, illustrated account of the tour appears in "Eisenbahn Magazin" April 1999, pp. 40-44, under the title "50 Jahre Israel Railways". The DGEG is also now preparing a proper hardback book on Israel Railways.

**PHOTO 2: Eight-wheel automated shunting loco at Har Tzin Works. 3/11/98. (Photo: Sybil Ehrlich.)**

## 44:13. WD 2-10-0's to Greece.

An article in *"Today's Railways"* No. 37, 1/99, p.17f., notes that two of the sixteen former War Department (WD) "Austerity" 2-10-0's that were shipped in 1946 from Egypt to Greece, and which for many years as the "Lambda-Beta" class formed a significant part



of the SEK (later OSE) fleet until withdrawal in 1977, are now being restored to use for tourist trains. Nos. Lb 951 & Lb 962 were sold back to the UK for preservation in 1984, first to the Mid-Hants Railway and then to the North Yorkshire Moors Rly. (See *"Mid-Hants News"* No. 44, 1984, pp. 4-6 for the dramatic story of their purchase and transport); Nos. 952, 953, 954, 956, 957, 958, 959, 963, & 965 were scrapped at various locations in 1984/5, Nos. 955, 961 and 966 are still stored in poor condition at Athens or Thessaloniki, but Nos. Lb962 & Lb964 are now in working order once more.

Although Greece itself does not come under the *"Harakevet"* area, twenty of these locos were built by North British in 1943-44 for use in the Middle East (four, NBL 25471-74 of 1944) were later purchased in 1946 by Syria as their 150.685-688; see Hughes pp. 49, 66, 71). The remaining 16, having been declared surplus to requirements by the British - they were at that time stored at Ein Shamms, not apparently having been used since arrival - were sold via UNRRA for £12,500 each to the Greek Government.

Tourret (*"Allied Military Locomotives"* Ch. 31, pp. 120-128) notes that WD Nos. 3652-3660, 3672/4/7/8/82-5 (later these had 70,000 added to their numbers) went to the Middle East in "late 1943", were "erected, run-in on the PR, and then put into storage at Suez. One, at least, was recorded as working a freight train from Beirut to Lydda 'on trial'." Four were worked from Suez to Haifa by 193 Rly. Optg. Coy. R.E. in June 1944 and worked Haifa - Azzib and Haifa - Lydda before being transferred on loan to the DHP in Syria the following month. The rest remained in store.

J.W.P. Rowledge, (*"Heavy Goods Engines of the War Dept."* Vol. 3), has an account of the transfer to Egypt on p.12, the Greek purchases on p. 17 and the Syrian on p. 18; photos C45-47 show Greek examples, and C9 a WD example at Medain Ekbes in 1944, C48 a Syrian one. C8 shows WD 3652 in store at Ein Shamms depot, near Cairo, in 1944. He notes: "It was first planned to send them by rail but Turkey demanded an exorbitant fee for their transit so instead they were despatched by sea to Salonika in January 1946."

In fact, more detail on this obscure incident is cast by two letters in the "Ganzach HaMedinah" (Israel State Archives) in Jerusalem, file Mem/376/R/19/45. ("Mem" = Memshalah, i.e. Government; "R" series refers to Railways; the "45" indicates the year 1945.) On Oct. 7th. 1945 the Greek Consul in Jerusalem wrote to the Chief Secretariat of the Palestine Government :

"I have the honour to inform you that the Royal Greek Government is now acquiring, by the channel of UNRRA, 8 locomotive-engines and about 150 railway-trucks, from the stock available in Middle-East, in order to partly replace the rolling-stock of the Greek State Railways lost during the War. These engines and trucks, which presently are in Egypt, are intended to be sent to Greece through Palestine, Syria and Turkey.

Therefore, I have been directed by my Government to approach you and beg you to kindly permit their passage through the railway-system of Palestine. I understand that the Greek Government would be most grateful to you if the Direction of the Palestine Railways could issue the necessary instructions for the swiftest possible passage of the above-mentioned stock through Palestinian territory.

The exact date when this rolling-stock will be ready to leave Egypt will probably be given by the UNRRA H.Q. Cairo, or by Mr. L. C. Bingham, a high-ranked UNRRA officer, who is soon leaving Greece for Egypt, just to make there the proper arrangements for the purchase and forwarding to Greece of the said engines and trucks.

I would greatly appreciate if you kindly consider the matter as urgent, and inform me in consequence, in order to enable me also to reply to my Government at the earliest date....."

Presumably Mr. G. Christodulo wrote in similar vein to the Egyptian, Syrian and Turkish authorities. In Palestine, at least, things moved fast, and the letter must have been forwarded immediately. What survives in the file is a reply from Arthur Kirby, the P.R. General Manager to the Chief Secretary, dated 15/10/45:

"The movement will probably be arranged by the Military Authorities..... suggestions are being made to the D.D.Mov. Levant, that the locos should work through Palestine in steam, hauling the railway trucks. By moving the rolling stock in this way, it would not be necessary to employ any PR locomotive power, and it is probable that the Railways through Syria and Turkey would similarly welcome such relief. If it is possible for the locos to be worked through in this way, I would suggest that, as a gesture to the Greek Government, we should permit the trains over the PR system free of charge. If, however, it is necessary to haul the locos dead, it would be necessary to raise the appropriate haulage charges on both the locos and railway trucks. In such case it is probable that the charges will be raised through the military accounts.

P.S. Since dictating this letter I have learnt that, owing to the estimated very high cost of transport through Turkey, it is improbable that these locos and wagons will pass overland."

The Chief Secretary agreed to this proposal for free transit in a memo dated 22/10/45, but on 24/10/45 Kirby sent another brief letter confirming that the overland route would not now be used. And so the ships sailed from Alexandria to Salonika (Thessaloniki) with not eight but sixteen heavy locos and tenders, and presumably an unspecified amount of freight rolling stock.

"C.R.J." No. 117, p. 368, adds that the locos had their frames overhauled at OSE's Thessaloniki Works, with boiler work entrusted to the private Ifestos Works at Thessaloniki. Total cost of the restoration project was about £120,000. The locos are to be stabled at Drama depot and in Summer 1999 will work special trains between Drama and Xanthi, along the picturesque Nestos River valley.

**44:14. Former WD 0-6-0 Diesel Shunter.** "Today's Railways" No. 39, p.66, refers to an earlier item in their issue 20 (8/97) regarding former LMS Derby-built diesel shunters that had been used in the Middle East, North Africa and Italy by the War Department - one survivor was former LMS 7103, later FS 700.001, yet later purchased by track maintenance contractor Cariboni. It has now been acquired by the Museo Ferroviario Piemontese (Piedmont Railway Museum) in Torino, Italy.

#### **44:15. TURKISH DIESELS.**

An article by Philip Wormald and David Haydock in "Today's Railways" 38 (2/99) p. 26 on General Motors locos in Europe included mention of the Class DE22 000 : "TCDD.[received].its first locomotives in late 1985, after placing an order for no less than 86 locomotives. Very similar in design to the Yugoslavian Class 664.1, the first half of the order was shipped directly from the USA. The remainder of the order was assembled locally in Turkey, and delivered from July 1987 to 1990. The 86 Co-Co locomotives are model G26CW-2, fitted with a non-turbocharged 16-645E engine of 2250hp, and weigh 117.3 tonnes. Maximum speed is 120 km/h. Numbering is DE22 001-086. The locos are equipped with dynamic brakes.

Although this class is not able to supply any form of train heating, a steam generator van may be controlled remotely from the locomotive. Most locos are painted in a bright red livery, though apparently there are a few in blue or green ! 66 locos are based in Ankara and the remaining 20 are based further east at Sivas. Those at Ankara work freights on the line to the heavy industrial port of Zonguldak on the Black Sea. The locos at Sivas are thought to work to Samsun, another Black Sea port."

#### **44:16. RETURN TO WADI SURAR.** By Paul Cotterell.

Some time ago Sybil Ehrlich queried me about the changes carried out to the main building



at Wadi Surar (see photos in 22:22 and 40:10 for a 'then and now' comparison..) She had made a field study trip to the station and, very reasonably, wanted to know why structural alterations had been made to what was only a minor intermediate station. I



could not give her an answer then, but now I can. The accompanying view shows Wadi Surar station after it had received attention by saboteurs. I think the place was blown up in The Disturbances of the late 1930's, but cannot be positive on this point. It might have been demolished in the 1946-48 period. As can be seen, the sabotage was comprehensive, requiring an almost complete rebuilding. Certain parts of the station were rearranged or dispensed with entirely in this reconstruction.

#### **44:17. MORE ON EGYPTIAN COACHES IN ISRAEL.**

By Paul Cotterell.

A couple of basic lists have been turned up which give a little more information on ex-Egyptian coaches on Israel Railways (see 38:5:(c).) These lists date from the early to mid-1960s and the pertinent details are set out below:

Type	Builder	Numbers	Amount
Service coaches	E.S.R.	4907-4909.	4. (sic !)
Egyptian coach	Nesseldorfer	1256	1
-do-	Metropolitan	1153	1
-do-	Cammell	1498	1
-do-	Cammel Lard (sic !)	WD201	1

I have recorded these vehicles as they appeared in the original lists - warts and all. Numbers 4907-9 would, I believe, have been those wooden-bodied six-wheel coaches, one of which (No. 4720) is now in the museum and another (4717) is part of the breakdown train at Haifa East. Obvious queries attach to WD201. In one of the lists 1153 and 1498 are noted as "Mivtza Ladesh" (i.e. from the Sinai Campaign of 1956) but all these coaches are believed to have been captured in that year, with the possible exception of WD201. Alan Clothier gave further details of 1498 in 40:6:c, and I hope he will be able to do so for the other coaches listed here."

[Editor: One ESR-type 6-wheel coach was used by PR as their Pay Coach, and may well have been still on the system in 1948. Otherwise, it is interesting how few coaches were taken over - with the handover of the Sinai line in 1948, presumably, and the cessation of through running to Cairo, presumably all the PR and ESR stock was suitably separated and returned before the lines were broken.]

#### **44:18. MORE ON THE ISRAEL MODEL RAILWAY CLUB.**

The two locos mentioned in 42:18 are at Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, south of Lod. One is standing outside the premises of the "Railway Model Club of Israel"; it comprises a shell with rigid 4wh - 4wh. layout, painted grey. One axle box at the front is marked "MBA E19140", and one axle-box at the rear is marked "Krupp 20008". The other (minus wheels) is painted blue, has no identification whatsoever, and lies in a playground some 100 m. away.

Uri Ben-Rehav reports that the Club is very busy at present; on the HO layout members are landscaping and installing lighting in the buildings and along the highway; one member has brought to life an old, broken-down cable-car and so now two internally-lit gondolas make their way to the mountain tops; Other members are working on an N Gauge layout, "along the wall".

But there are also outside activities to report: Due to the sudden tragic death of a member his widow donated his layout to the Haemato-Oncological Childrens Unit in Tel Hashomer Hospital, so, after a complete overhaul by Club members - it is now operated by the children there (albeit regularly maintained and serviced by the Club.) In addition the Club was approached by a man whose son, an Israeli Army officer, had fallen in Lebanon, and had had a layout; he also wanted to donate it to a hospital. So, in similar fashion, this layout has now been installed at the "Schneider Hospital for Children" at Petach Tikva.

The Club is also happy that some active new members in the vital 14-17 age bracket have joined - a future generation. Meetings take place at Kibbutz Netzer Sereni every Friday afternoon, and "any reader of these lines is welcome."

The Editor managed to make a visit on Friday 18/3/99. For any future visitors, be aware: The Kibbutz is perhaps 15-20 mins. walk from Beer Yaakov station, though the current Friday service is not very helpful; head south, past the "Hatzar Netzer" country club, into the industrial area of Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, turn left, and this brings you to the gate of the residential part of the Kibbutz. Almost facing you at the gate is the shell of a former narrow-gauge fairground loco (see 42:18); in the "Miklat" (Shelter) under this mound is the Club. There are regular minibuses ("Route 13") every half hour from Rishon leZion, the last at about 15.30. An Egged bus "157" was noted arriving around 15.15. However, as public transport on a Friday winds down around the time the club members are starting their work, the only way of getting back to the outside world is with a lift.....

## 44:19. PEACE ISLAND.

Uri Ben-Rehav visited the so-called "Peace Island" next to Kibbutz Ashdot Yaakov in December 1998 and was surprised to encounter two former IR ballast wagons there - well away from any

standard gauge railway, albeit some 15m from the former Hedjaz embankment (see Turret "*Hedjaz Railway*", plate 37). They stand on about 30m of track. It transpires that a Mr. Ofer Lewin of Kibbutz Ashdot Yaakov



Meuchad is developing the site on behalf of the Kibbutz; the site also includes a Roman bridge in good condition and other items of interest to hikers and tourists. His reply to the question as to why standard gauge items had been acquired was simply "As I couldn't lay my hands on other objects, this is better than nothing". His aim now is to acquire an IR loco - not HR stock, of course. Uri adds: "For the average 'Homo Ignoramus' that should

be enough, but for the sake of his blood pressure, Hans Kohut should not visit the site" !!

[Ed. notes - these look like "25Resh" (i.e. "Reved" ballast wagons - does any reader have more information ? Even another static display of items that would otherwise be scrapped is to be welcomed.)]

#### **44:20. NOTE FROM THE PAST.**

In its "65 Years Ago" column on 9/3/99, the '*Jerusalem Post*' reprinted a story from its predecessor the '*Palestine Post*' of 9/3/34: That "many Jewish railwaymen had left their jobs due to low wages and poor general conditions. The number of Jews still employed among the railway personnel was below 200 out of 3,000. Jews who wished to work on Sunday, instead of Saturday, were refused permission by the Railway Administration."

#### **44:21. FILM CRITICS.**

Once upon a time there was a freight train known as "No. 329", which headed southbound every evening. At Tel Baruch Junction it usually had to wait for half an hour or so, until the preceding freight "No. 327" had cleared the fairly lengthy section to Rinatya, beyond B'nei Berak and Rosh HaAyin. At this period the Drive-In Cinema in the former triangle at Tel Baruch was still in operation and, late at night, after the main programme had finished, it had a habit of showing pornographic films to a special late-night audience. And somehow Freight 329 would wait and wait while the crew, absorbed, showed absolutely no impatience at all with the red signal impeding their progress.....

#### **44:22. THE BAGHDAD RAILWAY 2-8-0's.**

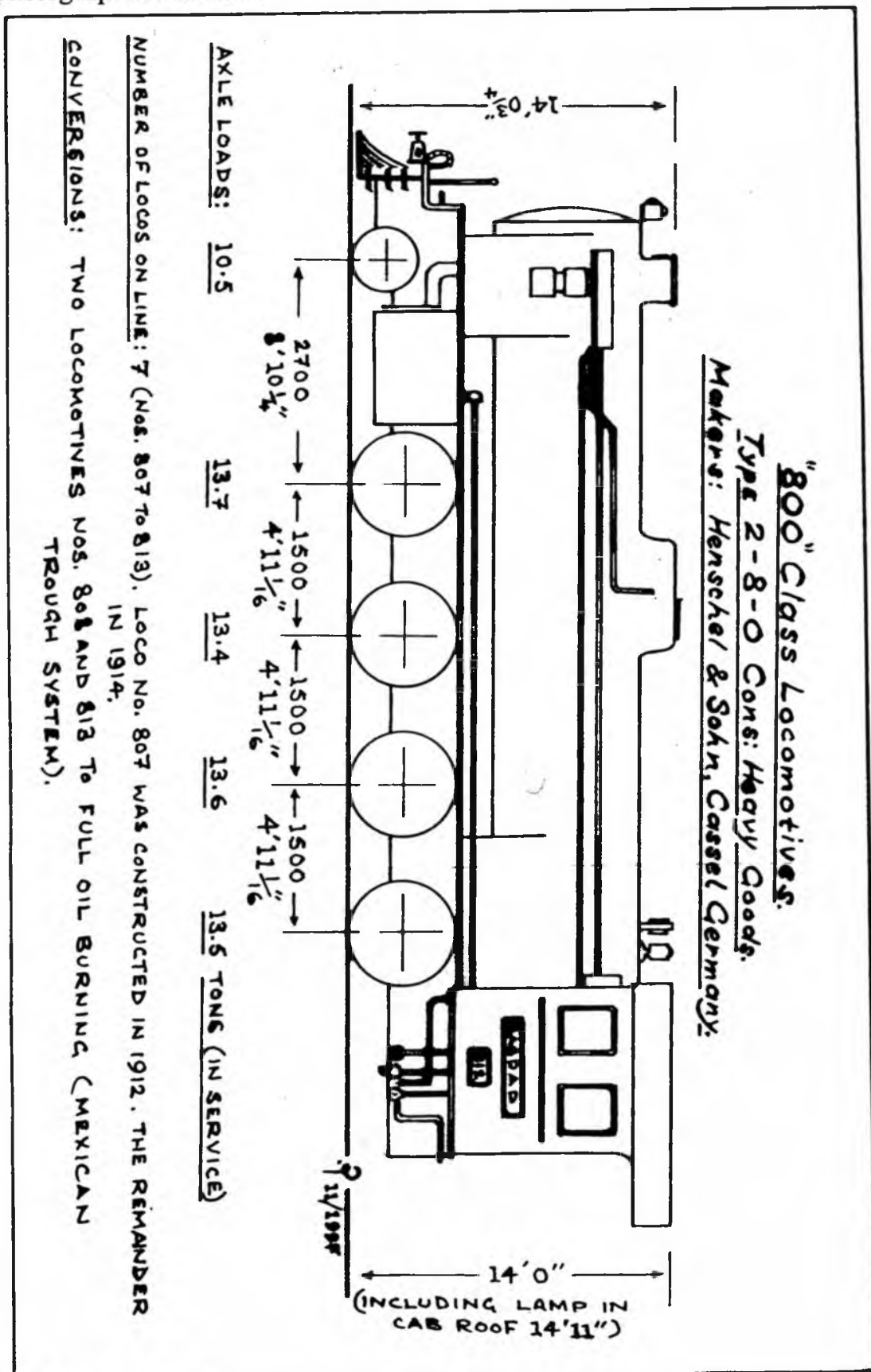
By Paul Cotterell.

Two of these locos were shown in embarrassing circumstances in 38:16 after they had been sabotaged by the retreating German forces, and Hugh Hughes noted this incident in his perennially useful reference work '*Middle East Railways*'. Also included on p. 96 of his book is a photo of one of these engines as Iraqi State 1406, dumped at Shalchiya Workshops in 1966. More information can now be added following the rare discovery of a book of blueprints among material awaiting sorting for the Haifa Railway Museum archives. This book is entitled "MR [Mesopotamian Railways] 1919, Baghdad West Division, Rolling Stock." - and I wonder how it came to be found at Haifa ! It refers to the "Baghdad Samara Railway", noting that Samara had been captured on 23 April 1917 and that "1st. train ran on 5th. May 1917". Only "16 engines and 297 vehicles" had been seized by the British, and these are illustrated in the blueprints. (Intending passengers must have had a hard time as no coaches are shown.)

The blueprint book, dated 3 April 1919, commented further: "This book is intended to serve as a useful Pocket Guide only. Further details can be obtained on application to the Loco Carr. & Wagon Offices."

The outline weight diagram for the 800-Class 2-8-0 is herewith appended. My tracing of the original omits a few non-essential details only. The loco is shown with a cabside plate carrying the name BAGDAD (sic). This was for the railway and was not the engine

name (they had none). A discrepancy between the diagram and the photos mentioned above is the shape and position of the smokebox saddle / steam pipe covers. Such discrepancies are not unknown in official drawings, and where confusion exists it is usually best to rely on photographic evidence.



Further details on the blueprint are listed below for convenience:

Weights: - Empty 57.8 Tons. In service 64.7 Tons.

Brakes: Westinghouse and Steam.

Number of Tubes: 154 and 21 Superheater Tubes.

Total Heating Surface: - 2168 Sq. Ft.

Grate Area:- 33.67 Sq. Ft.

Boiler Pressure:- 170 lbs. per Sq. Inch.

Cylinders Dia:- 23 5/8". Piston Stroke 24 3/4".

Dia. of Wheels (with Tyres):- Coupled: 4' -5 1/8". Poney [sic] 3'-11 1/4".

Wheel Base:- Rigid 9'-10 3/16". Total 23'-7 7/16"

Superheater: Schmidt.

Tractive Effort:- 31,200 lbs.

Speed: 38 Miles per Hour.

The reference to a rigid wheel base of 9' 10 3/16th" evidently indicates that one of the driving axles had some side-play. Probably this was on the leading driving axle, but the system of lateral movement is not recorded.

More details of these 2-8-0's are given on page 94 of 'Middle East Railways':

<u>Baghdad Rly. No.</u>	<u>Builder's No.</u>	<u>Date.</u>	<u>Iraqi State Railways Nos.</u>
807	11614	1912	410, later 1410.
808	11747	1913	411, later 1411.
809	11748	1913	412, later 1412.
810	11749	1913	413, later 1413.
811	11750	1913	414, later 1414.
812	11751	1913	415, later 1415.
813	11752	1913	416, later 1416.

(N.B. Blueprint shows 808-813 as being built in 1914.)

I know nothing else about these Henschel 2-8-0s, nor anything of their careers. It is my intention to feature other locos from this blueprint book in future issues of Harakevet."

## **44:23. LAYING IT ALL OUT.**

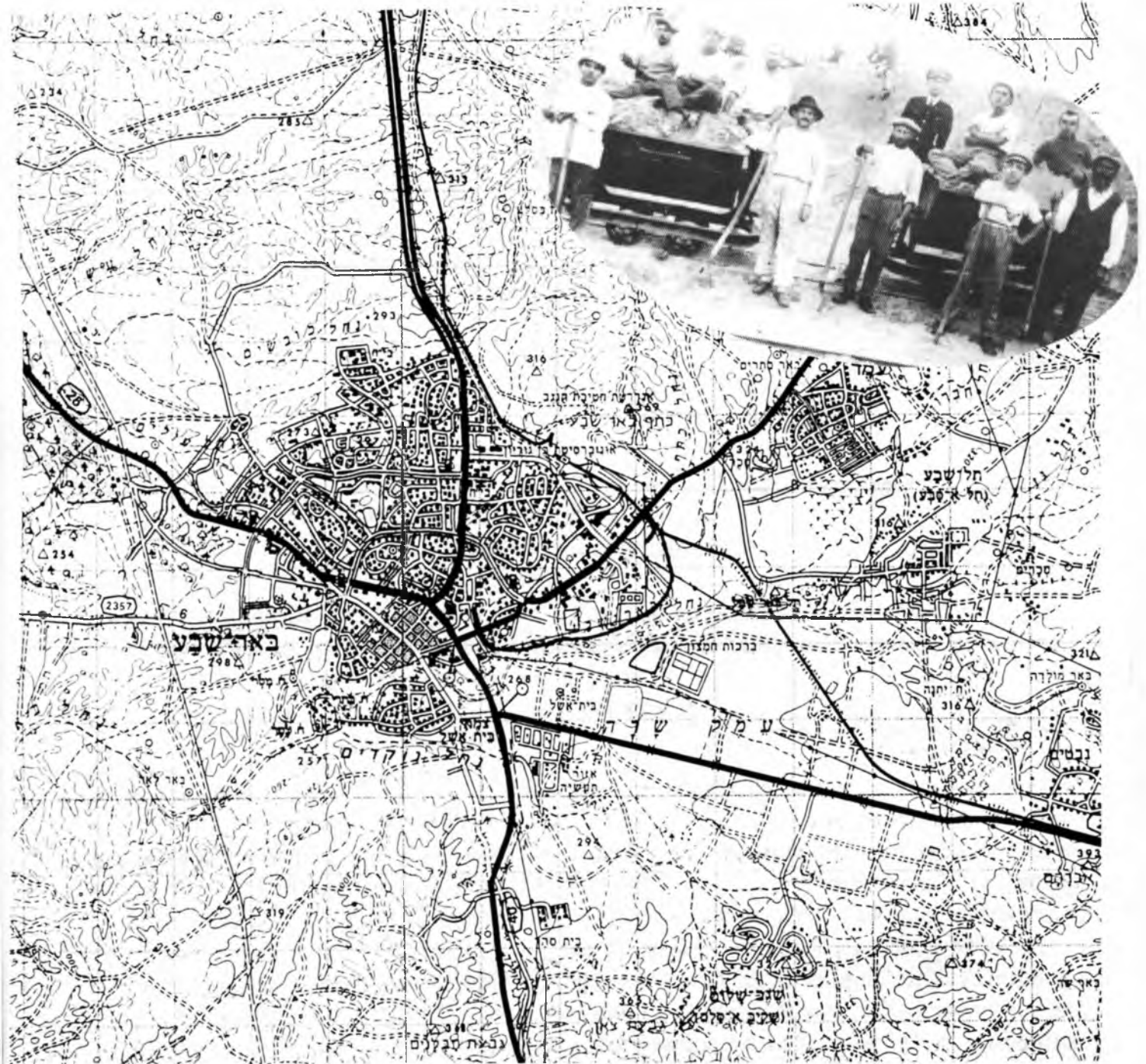
(By Paul Cotterell.)

Temporary portable light railways were sometimes used in Palestine for the laying out of new streets or even new neighbourhoods of towns. Tal Dekel has told me that an old tip wagon is displayed in the Municipal Museum at Nahariyya, though I have yet to go and inspect it. Presumably it would have been used for much the same work as seen in the accompanying photo. This comes from the archives of the Lavon Research Institute of the Labour Movement in Tel Aviv. The photo (neg. no. 33328) shows a group of "halutzim" (pioneers) in the employ of Tel Aviv Municipality. They are levelling sand dunes in preparation for the building of Rothschild Boulevard in the Nahmaniya neighbourhood of town sometime in 1925-26. The tip wagons were doubtless hand-propelled. Back then such

physical labour was not merely considered a suitable occupation for Jews, it was almost sacred work. Nowadays the construction industry relies on Arab labour and worklers imported from abroad, while unemployed Israelis are happy to pick up dole money !

## 44:24. BEER SHEBA PLANS.

Elsewhere in this issue mention has been made of the new IR extension into the centre of Beer Sheba; the accompanying map has been received from Sybil Ehrlich, indicating the approximate course of the new route into the centre - it appears from this diagram that a terminus is envisaged, rather than a layout permitting possible future through running to Dimona. It is hoped to provide more information in a future issue.



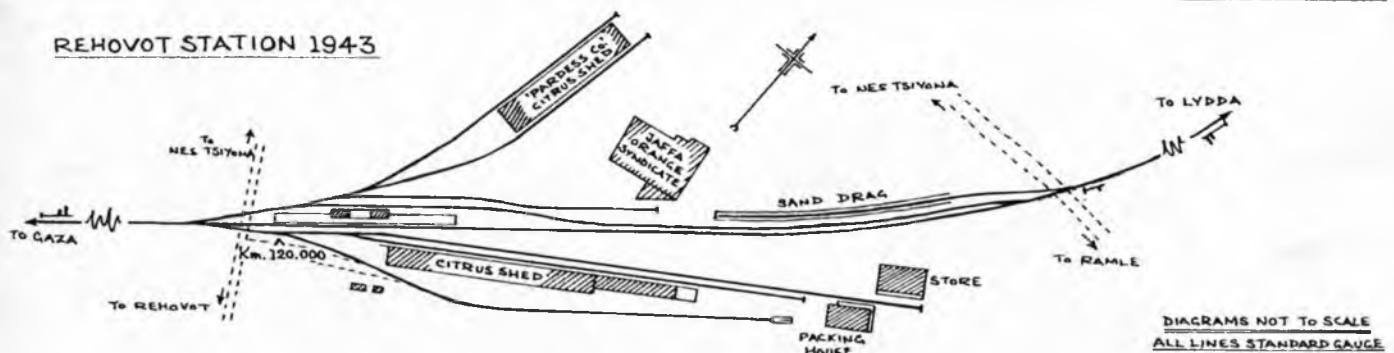
## 44:25: STATION TRACK PLANS.

Paul Cotterell has sent a substantial number of plans, and a number remain "on file". Here are a few more. But first - due to a technical hitch, back in 39:8 plans for Jenin, Arrabeh and Massoudieh appeared, without their accompanying text. Here it is:-

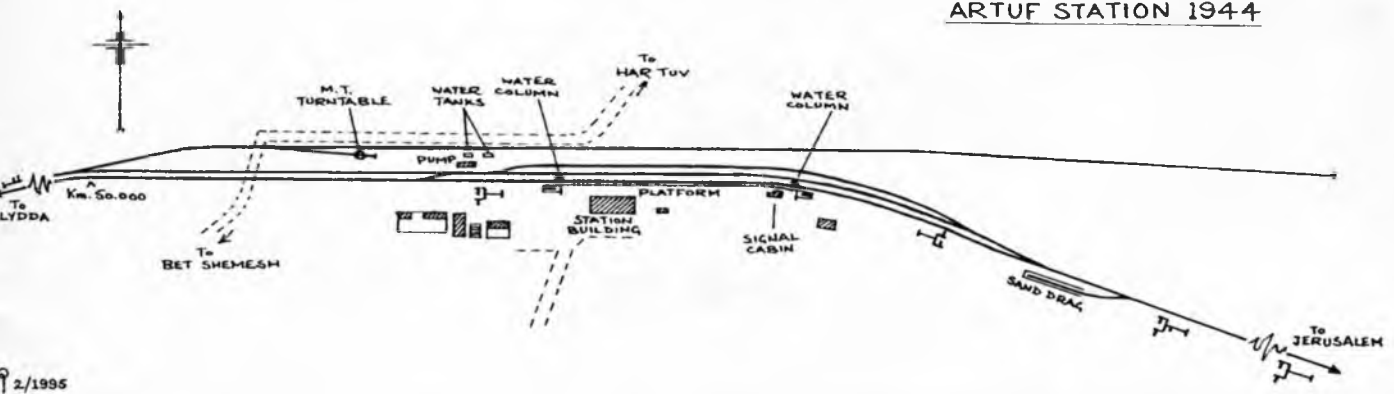
**"Three Stations in Samaria".** These layouts are based on official PR Ways & Works Dept. Diagrams. Between Arrabeh and Massoudieh was Sileh station, at Kilometre 40.2, but I have not drawn this since it was practically identical to the layout at Arrabeh. Quite recently I came across a PR Dept. of Ways & Works diagram dated 24.4.25, showing a station called Mukaibli at Kilometre 10.703 on the section from Afula to Jenin. The drawing indicated that Mukaibli station consisted of nothing more than a single small building alongside the track and, so far as I can recall offhand anyway, this is the only reference to a station at Mukaibli. Perhaps it was only a proposal ?

### REHOVOT AND ARTUF STATIONS.

REHOVOT STATION 1943



ARTUF STATION 1944



There is no particular reason for lumping Rehovot and Artuf together other than their fitting nicely on the same page ! It is evident from the PR Ways & Works Dept. layout plan that additional sidings were being proposed for Artuf in 1944. These, though, are indistinct so I decided to leave them off my sketch rather than introduce possible errors. The main proposal seems to have been for a second long siding to parallel that shown here. Several years later, of course, a connection was laid in to new cement works out of frame to the west-north-west. This cement works had a very short-lived 2'6" gauge internal

railway, and at least one Ruston & Hornsby 4wD to work its standard gauge sidings and the connection to what had by then become Bet Shemesh station. This Ruston diesel (305317 of 1950) is now displayed at the Museum Ha'Aretz in north Tel Aviv.

It will be seen that Rehovot station appears to lack starter signals; I think that small signal next to the Ramle - Nes Tsiyona road is for shunting purposes. Artuf, on the other hand, has an adequacy of both home and starting signals. Rehovot was at the centre of a major orange-growing district, and ample provision was made at the station for the citrus traffic.



***Bo-Bo T44 being rerailed at Halfa East yard, 28/6/98, after a minor derailment.  
(Photo: Theo Pelz.)***

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