

# HaRakevet

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הרכבת

A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East  
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88:01. First test run of Jerusalem LRV.  
24th February 2010

## EDITORIAL.

No News is not always Good News. It is noticeable that this quarter NO news has been received on the Hedjaz Railway, which truly appears to be getting more moribund by the month; in contrast the railways in Israel are expanding continuously and I have received many reports of construction and planned construction - each exceeding the other, so that if all goes to plan the next decades will indeed see a close-meshed network of high-speed electrified lines across the country. A messianic vision?

The Big News however has to be the movement, at last, of a tram in Jerusalem! This does not necessarily mean that the Messianic times have arrived, though there are no doubt some who would connect the two events.

Before regular service starts there is still a little while to wait, but as one says in German, quoting Galileo Galilei's muttered response to his accusers, "Sie bewegt sich doch!" "It really moves!"

To a personal note - the Editor had great plans to get on top of a backlog of jobs before this issue went to press and a combination of work and illness (nothing drastic but a heavy cold that refused to go away...) meant that the decision finally had to be taken to get this issue off to the printer before Pesach, when professional rabbinic commitments will mean yet another week away from the computer (and a week catching-up on my return). The Index has however been updated - details below - and some progress has been made, but this really is a one-man job. Current News and odd items from other Middle East systems has also been so extensive that a couple of historical items have had to be 'bumped' for now

At the time this issue is being 'put to bed' the news on the media is all about plans to build a new suburb in Jerusalem - which is apparently perceived as a threat to world peace - and issues of sanctions on Iran - which is also an issue which refuses to go away. This is the context in which those involved in assisting with this magazine live and work - it pays to remember this from time to time.

So - Enjoy!

### The Editor.

*First wiring works of the Jerusalem LRV Red Line between French Hilljunction and Ammunition Hill; source-CityPass;photo-Ashtrom*



## NEWS FROM THE LINE.

### (i). TEN-YEAR REVIEW.

From a press release of 11.01.2010: (Note, there is more information on some of these topics below.)

"The General Manager Mr. Itzhak Harel today presented a summary of developments over the decade between 2000 and 2010. The Railways can look back at the past decade as a significant turning point in their history, in which they have been transformed from a complementary mode of transport into a national haulier with massive development of infrastructures and an unprecedented growth in passenger traffic. This has tripled from 12M in 2000 to 36M in 2009!

Our biggest challenge is to cope with the growing demand - in 2009 passenger traffic rose by 1M compared with 2008, whilst neither new lines nor new stations were opened (although two stations, at Moshe Dayan and Yoseftal on the line to Rishon LeTzion West are completed). This is a rise of only 2.85% but taking into consideration the recession at the beginning of 2009 and a total of 64 days of line closures due to infrastructure works on the system, it is a remarkable achievement.

During the last five years alone passenger traffic rose by 34%, whilst the number of seats rose by 17% and the length of lines by only 12%. The daily number of trains rose by 56% from 218 in 2000 to 340 in 2009. Consequently, due to rising demand 17 new stations have been built in that period and stations now total 47 - an increase of almost 47%!

During 2009 the Railways continued to carry out extensive infrastructure works which included 60km. of new lines (compared with 49km. in 2008 and a forecast of 70km. in 2010); completion of 14 grade separations replacing level crossings; upgrading the passenger stations at Yavne East, Tel Aviv-HaShalom, Tel Aviv-HaHaganah and Kiryat Gat. New Park-and-Ride facilities have been opened at Kiryat Motzkin, Hadera West and Netanya stations and the ultramodern 'Masua' traffic control centre was opened at Haifa Hof-HaCarmel station.

2009 marked the end of service of all the 56 old loco-hauled coaches, 7 of which dated from 1955, these being more than replaced by seven modern 10-car single-deck push-pull sets built by Siemens. Further vehicles are under way to bring the total number to 87, as ordered. The railways are also actively fighting against overcrowding on trains;

recent new tenders have been published for purchasing more double-deck train sets and diesel locos, as well as an emergency purchase of rolling-stock (this currently involves discussions with Siemens and an option for stock for the Tel Aviv - Rishon-leTzion West line due to open in 2011.) Should these talks fail the Railways will ask permission from the Finance Ministry's Accountant-General to negotiate with another supplier. [See below. Ed.]

The Ayalon line in Tel Aviv will soon be quadrupled to allow for yet further trains to pass along it.

Parallel to the growth in traffic and infrastructure works there was a dramatic decline of 42% in safety-related events during 2009 compared to the previous year.

2009 also marks a turning point regarding the change of the railways' definition from an Operations-oriented to a Service-oriented company, according to the targets and guidelines upon which Mr. Harel decided when commencing his job in 2007. Within this policy constant measures have been taken regarding punctuality, additionally, service providers amongst the employees are also being trained. Daily 'invisible' measuring and assessment takes place, carried out by unseen customers, surveyors and focus groups, in order to improve the service to the public, including telephone and internet services.

A survey undertaken by 'Fortune' magazine for 'Yediot Acharanot', Israel's most popular newspaper, placed the railways in first place for response time - 2 seconds! All other providers of telephone answering services - such as bus operators and airlines - were well behind, ranging from 27 to 400 seconds!

A survey carried out by the Railways in Oct./Nov. to gauge customer satisfaction gave a grade of 5.41 out of a possible 7; good, but not good enough. The problems were mainly due to delays; the mark for comfort when waiting at stations and the availability of station teams was 6 out of 7. Average punctuality in 2009 was 86.7%, compared with 91.7% in 2008. This was caused mainly by the severe shortage of rolling stock but also on the (mainly) Sundays and Thursdays when thousands of soldiers use rail to get to and from their bases. The Railways are trying to tackle this problem by making arrangements with the Army to stagger departure and arrival times and avoid the peak hours (e.g. on Sundays after 9am), but due to a disagreement between the Finance and Defence Ministries to provide the \$8.1M needed for this, [why?] the problem has not been resolved.

In contrast to passenger traffic, freight has been badly affected by the recession and declined during 2009 by 60%! Revenues shrank by a third, to about \$27M, whereas passenger revenues rose by 4% to ca. \$141M. The current

loss is now \$5.4M, compared to \$13.5M in 2008. There is little doubt that had freight traffic held up IR would have attained a financial balance.

Finally, from the organisational point of view, 184 of the veteran employees have retired at a cost of \$21.6M, thus reducing the average age of the company's human resources. From now on only the General Manager will have a high salary, not all the other seniors!

Another important statement: "The railways will have no monopoly on tracklaying; slowly and quietly this job is being done by private sub-contractors (such as Lesico who also carry out rail-welding); the railways' job is to operate trains and thus to provide service for the public; all other tasks can be outsourced."

#### **(ii). INVESTMENT PLANS.**

Intensive discussions took place recently at the office of the Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz, regarding Prime Minister Netanyahu's plan to increase investment in the railways. The highest sum mentioned is around \$19.7 Billion (according to the Finance Ministry) and the lowest around \$10.8 Billion (according to the Transport and Roads Safety Ministry). It is clear that the final decision will be taken by the Prime Minister.

#### **(iii). JERUSALEM A1 LINE APPROVAL.**

From a press release of 17.01.10 by the Transport and Road Safety Ministry:-

"Now at last it is final; the Government approved today (Sunday 17.01) the completion of the remaining sections of the A1 fast rail link to Jerusalem between Sha'ar Hagai and Binyanei Ha'Uma in Jerusalem, according to the plan presented by the Transport and Road Safety Minister Mr. Yisrael Katz. The approved 22-kilometre double-track alignment consists of two sections : the first between Sha'ar Hagai and Mevasseret Zion includes two twin-bored tunnels and two bridges; the second between Mevasseret Zion and Binyanei Ha'Uma station includes two tunnels, a bridge and the station, the platforms of which will be built 80m below street level. The cost of the two sections is about \$815M out of 1.85 Billion, the cost of the section from Anava Junction (from where the line to Modi'in runs.) The A1 line is expected to open at the end of 2016.

The Transport and Road Safety Ministry General Manager (retired Police Commissioner) Jacob Ganot, has presented the government with a plan to shorten the schedules for carrying out the engineering works; If this is approved it will enable completion by the end of 2015.

Minister Katz mentioned that today's decision puts an end to a long process of statutory planning which checked several alternative alignments, including the one running

over Yitla Creek, the one finally selected, this being the main reason for lengthy discussions at the National Council for Building and Planning. He further emphasized that the selected alternative alignment gives the maximum expression both for design conditions for building railway lines through hard topographical terrains and for the desire of the design bodies to minimize the damage to the environment and landscape.

It should be mentioned that the first section of the route, between Ben-Gurion Airport and Anava Junction, shared with the line to Modi'in, was completed about three years ago; the engineering infrastructure works on the 8km. section between Anava Junction and Latrun Trappist Monastery were completed shortly afterwards. The 4km. section between Latrun and Sha'ar Hagai is currently in the tendering process."

#### **(iv). JERUSALEM FAST LINE.**

From an IR press release of 02.02.2010: "The A1 project for the fast link moved a step forward with today's announcement that the Railways' Higher Tendering Committee had announced the winning bidder to design and build the \$37M bridge No. 10 - 'Solel-Boneh

Infrastructures' belonging to the Shikun-uBinuy Group, a veteran and well-experienced design and construction company. This project includes the 975m-long bridge to be built over the park known as Cedars Valley, located between the A3 twin-bored tunnels to the west and A4 to the east, and 80m high over the valley. It will thus become the highest bridge of any kind in Israel. Also included are a supporting wall No. 5 near the slope to road No. 1, and building an access road adjacent to Road No. 1. Works to be carried out under the bid include designing, obtaining approvals from authorities, building, quality control and testing.

Six bidders participated in the contest. During the process the committee disqualified the Menrav construction company due to a conflict of interest, and PB also, which until a few months ago had been the Railways' Controller appointed by the Government.

General Manager Yitzhak Harel said: 'After receiving all the governmental approvals, the railways are now working at full speed in order to promote the infrastructure works, strictly adhering to the proper procedures, transparency, regulated works procedures and integrity."

#### **(v). THE EILAT LINE!!**

In another press release of 17.01.2010 from the Ministry, it was

announced: "The Council of Ministers for Internal Affairs and Services today approved the plan of Minister Katz to extend

Toll Highway No. 6 southwards between Lehavim road junction (near Lehavim -Rahat railway station) and Sha'ar HaNegev (Negev Gate), a total length of 45 km. In addition a double-track railway is to be built parallel to the highway, both of which bypass Beer-Sheva to the east. This will be the first section of the future line to Eilat on the Red Sea, and will provide easy access both by private car and public transport to the local population." This approved plan is part of an overall plan for building more roads and railways all over Israel. [But see below.]

**(vi) . GRADE SEPARATIONS.**

From an Isra-Rail press release of 05.01.2010:-

"The railways continue to invest in safety measures for the benefit both of train passengers and car drivers. One element of this is the intensive construction of grade separations - the latest was opened

on 30.12.2009 at the settlement of Beit Gamliel (between Rehovot and Yavne East), replacing Level Crossing Nos. 144 & 145.

The \$16.3M project included building an overhead 150m-long road bridge over the line as well as over the parallel Road No. 410, widening of Road 410 over 900 metres, building a 1km. long access road to the nearby Industrial Zone and re-arranging the junction at its entrance to Road 410, building a pedestrian ramp over the railway and Road 410, building a 40m-long railway bridge over Gamliel Creek, reinforced walls at the access ramps to the main bridge as well as along the access road to the industrial zone, lighting, landscaping and landscape development as part of a national infrastructures project."

**(vii) . RECYCLING.**

From a press release of 10.01.2010:-

"The Railways are currently deepening their environmental commitment by increasing the use of recycled materials and bringing this subject up for public discussion. On 04.01.2010 a conference was held by the Infrastructure Dept., at which the emphasis was on keeping the environment 'green' and clean by using existing materials, and reducing damage to natural and national resources. Participants included representatives of the Environment Protection Ministry, National Roads Co., Institute of Standards, laboratories, project managers, designers, soil and land consultants."

Mr. Uri Tal, co-ordinator of solid waste materials in the Environment Protection Ministry, gave a presentation on integrating the use of recycled materials in the railways; Dr. Arkadi Rabinovich, engineering manager of the Infrastructures Dept., spoke on using such materials in the infrastructure. The President of the Recycling Subcontractors Forum, Mr. Tzvika David, and head of the Standardisation Committee Prof. Ilan Yishai also spoke.

The railways are currently using recycled materials in various ways; ballast no longer suitable for track is being used in ditches; rails are being re-used, concrete sleepers are being crushed, the steel parts separated and then the crushed concrete is milled and distributed in ditches. In addition containers for collecting recyclable paper, plastic and metal containers have been put in place at all stations and work sites."

**(viii) . MORE WORKS ON BEER-SHEVA LINE.**

Due to further infrastructure works in connection with double-tracking on the line to Beer Sheva, there were to be no services between Kiryat Gat and Beer-Sheva on Saturday night 16.01.2010, traffic returning to normal the next day. The works include activating the signalling for the double-track section between Ahuzam and Tel Nagila; closing Tel Nagila station for upgrading, and activating two radar systems, one at Teufa South and the other at Lod level crossings. Consequently train services would terminate at Kiryat Gat.

**(ix) . MORE ROLLING STOCK ORDERS AFTER ALL.**

From an IR press release of 19.01.10: "The Railways' Higher Tenders Committee approved on 14.01.10 the activation of the emergency purchasing option for new single-deck push/pull train coaches - a total of 27 trailers and 4 power cars/driving trailers, at an overall cost of 46M Euros. The order is placed on Siemens Transportation by exercising an option in the initial agreement - Siemens being currently the only rolling-stock manufacturer with such an option.

This 'emergency purchasing' is to provide the additional rolling stock needed for the new line to be opened in 2011 between Tel Aviv and Rishon-Le-Tzion West, with stations in Holon and Bat-Yam, where tens of thousands of daily commuters will be added to the already-growing passenger traffic. The agreement was signed after a public tender had been published and after some tough negotiating (which was even suspended at one point) regarding delivery dates, including the increasing of penalties for late deliveries. In the end a compromise was agreed upon, according to which the penalties will be modular, which means that the majority would be paid by Siemens if the power cars are delivered in longer than nineteen months, whilst the penalties for the trailer cars will be smaller. In addition the railways agreed to be more flexible regarding the delivery schedule of the trailer cars, to be between 19 and 24 months." (The reason for this is that the reduction of the existing trains from 10 to 9 cars, due to the inability of the Vossloh locos to haul ten coaches, means that there is a current surplus of trailer coaches but a shortage of driving trailers.) The deal also includes a requirement to deal finally with the various technical difficulties which have arisen

with the trains already supplied. This emergency purchase is in addition to the tenders already published for 60 double-deck coaches and 15 double-deck driving trailers.

On 12.03.2010 came a further press release:-

"The Israel Railways has granted Siemens an order worth millions. The German firm will build 31 passenger coaches with a total value of 47M Euros.

Four years ago the Siemens subsidiary Siemens-Mobility achieved its first order; at that time IR ordered 87 coaches with an option for a further 585 coaches; the new order effectively consists of the first tranche of this option; they are the type 'Viaggio Light' and are intended for use between Tel Aviv and Rishon leTzion. The contract was signed this Tuesday.

"The contract confirms the good cooperation with the Israeli State Railways" said Hans-Joerg Grundmann, the head of Siemens Mobility. He was a member of an Industrial Delegation which went with Minister Ramsauer to Israel. The Viaggio Light is a low-floor carriage, that can be used in Israel not just for local but also for intercity traffic. The carriages will be produced in the Siemens works in Vienna."

In a later comment - it appears that the Chinese company CNR is currently not in the game for the provision of double-deck coaches; meanwhile IR has clarified that for those manufacturers who will be ready to provide maintenance facilities for seven to ten years, the number of double-deck cars would rise from 74 to 122, and of diesel-electric locomotives from 15 to 22.

**(x) . COLLECTIVE LABOUR AGREEMENT.**

From an IR press release of 28.01.10: "Mr. Yitzak Harel today signed a new collective labour agreement with the employees' Works Committee; this raises all wages by 4%, plus an additional 2% for improving the employment conditions of the 'Second Generation' staff - those who joined the railways from 2003. This will reduce the gap between their conditions and those of more veteran workers. Additionally about 100 development and infrastructure employees, working under a personal labour agreement, have been transferred to the collective labour agreement, taking into account their professional experience as technicians.

The new agreement is a significant achievement for both the management and the employees - it is the first one since 2003, when the Railways' status changed from State-owned to a Government Company; in this period the number of employees did not

rise significantly whereas the railways have expanded substantially. As Mr Harel said, 'This is a milestone in the railways' history, by regulating the labour relationships, thus making the company a service-oriented one, reducing the average age of the employees and thus improving the service; the employees and the committee should be appreciated for their dedication and the responsibility they have shown.'

[N.B. the Editor has just had his 56th. birthday and is becoming increasingly aware of 'ageism' and the assumption that younger, cheaper staff are all that a company needs!]

**(xi). INFRASTRUCTURE WORK.**

Two sections of line were due to be closed in February for infrastructure works to be carried out:-

From Monday 08.02.2010 to Wednesday 10.02.10 (inclusive), between Haifa Hof-HaCarmel (Raziel) and Nahariyya, with no trains serving any stations north of Hof-HaCarmel. On the Thursday normal schedules will return with the exception of Train No. 5, which regularly starts at Lev-HaMifratz at 00:21 but will instead start at Hof-HaCarmel at 00:38. During this time a 500m section of track and two turnouts will be replaced at Bat Galim station, and 150m of track and four turnouts replaced at Haifa East.

The line between Tel Aviv, Beer-Sheva and Dimona was to be closed between Sunday 21.02.2010 at 23:00 and Thursday 25.02.10 at 08:00. Consequently there would be no services to Kiryat Gat and southwards. On Sunday there would be no change to the schedules for northbound services, but the last through southbound train would be No. 127 from Nahariyya, calling at Kiryat Gat 21:04, Lehavim/Rahat 21:24, Beer-Sheva North 21.34 and Beer-Sheva Central 21.43. (Though Beer-Sheva - Dimona services would continue as normal.)

The last two trains, 129 from Acre to Beer-Sheva and 131 Tel Aviv to Beer-Sheva would terminate at Kiryat Gat at 22.04 and 23.04 respectively.

From the Monday to Wednesday then no trains at all run (including to Dimona); on Thursday 25.02.10 the first train from Beer-Sheva would be No. 108, dep. 09:27; Train 101 from Nahariyya would call Kiryat Gat 08:04 then all stops and terminate Beer-Sheva Central 08:43.

The first train from Dimona, No. 801, would depart from Beer-Sheva 08:40, the only return service on this day departing Beer-Sheva North/University (No. 824) at 17:00.

Works will include partial renewal of Kiryat Gat station infrastructure and replacing three turnouts there; at Lehavim/ Rahat a double turnout will be laid.

The Railway management has apologised to the public for inconvenience caused." [The Editor

adds: The hope must be that when IR gets used to having two bi-directionally-signalled tracks that routine works will no longer involve total closure of a route for a period of days!]

Further works from 21.03.10 at 20.00 to Thursday 25.03.10 05.00 involve no service between Kiryat-Gat, Lehavim.-Rahat, Beer-Sheva and Dimona. The Railways will provide free shuttle services between Kiryat-Gat and Beer-Sheva via Lehavim-Rahat station. Last regular northbound train (No. 128) will depart Beer-Sheva Central on 21.03 at 19.27; last regular southbound train (No. 121) calls at Lehavim-Rahat 18.24 and terminates Beer-Sheva Central 18.43. All other services start from or terminate at Kiryat-Gat. Traffic should return to normal from the first train on the Thursday.

**(xii). NEW TICKET DESIGN.**

IR is introducing a new design of tickets from March 2010. See Illustration - it uses the Siemens coaches in the background and the direction of travel is also clearly embossed on it..

**(xiii). TRAFFIC DEVELOPMENT.**

From an IR press release of



07.02.2010:-

"According to IR's Passenger Traffic Report published today, the new year has seen a good start with 3,021,981 passengers carried in January, compared with 2,740,355 in 2009 - a significant increase of 10.3%! Revenue from ticket sales rose from \$10,571 M in January 2009 to \$12,153 M in 2010, an increase of 17.1%! Growth in passenger traffic matches development in new lines and stations and efforts to improve services.

In the coming two years the suburban line between Tel Aviv and Rishon-le-Zion West (Moshe Dayan) is to be inaugurated, the doubling of the track to Beer-Sheva is to be completed, as well as reaching the final stages of doubling the Kiryat Motzkin - Nahariyya section."

**(xiv) THE NETANYAHU PLAN: ..ISRAEL WAYS".** (With Comments by Aharon Gazit).

On Sunday 08.02.10 Prime Minister Netanyahu was to present to his government his \$13.76 Billion programme for reform in transportation, the main idea being to eliminate the idea of a 'Periphery'.

The Finance Ministry, which is traditionally and in principle against the railways, and consequently

opposes the plan, claims it will cost the fantastic sum of \$21.58 Billion.

A team of journalists from Israel's most popular newspaper 'Yediot Aharonot' checked out four peripheral cities included in Netanyahu's plan and published their findings in an article - a summary follows:-

**(a). Eilat.** The most southerly city in Israel, located on the Red Sea with a port and an airport. Population is 46,400; 99% are employed within the city, primarily in Tourism. The city is linked with Tel-Aviv by bus; a journey takes six hours and the fare is almost \$20. By air it takes 1 hour and fares are becoming increasingly competitive with the bus.

The Mayor of Eilat, Mr. Meir Yitzhak Halevy, one of the greatest supporters of Netanyahu's plan, says of the conflict with the Finance Ministry: "It's a war, and we will see who wins. The rail link also has a Zionist aspect, it will link the Red Sea with the Mediterranean Sea and is supported by the Israel Ports Company; it will bring Eilat to the centre of Israel and the settlements in the Arava will bloom."

Netanyahu's plan speaks of a 200km/h double-track line, and journey times of 2.5 hours in each direction. The cost is estimated at \$1,75 Billion; only 175km. is needed to be built for the link.

The Finance Ministry in return claims the cost will reach \$2.32 Billion, and the project is unattractive as only 5% of the

city's inhabitants will use it; it is more likely that most passengers would prefer subsidized flights which take only a third of the time of train travel; Additionally it would be better to invest this sum in tax reductions and support of small businesses, which will add 2,000 jobs annually in the city and nearby areas.

[Naturally one could point out that a reduction in need for subsidized flights would also benefit the Treasury!! And that railway lines link cities rather than airports, and those connecting to a port and resort are used by people coming to, not from the town. ]

The other three cities are located in the northern periphery:-

**(b). Carmiel** with its 44,700 inhabitants is located in the Lower Galilee 23km. east of Acre, has a large industrial zone, but 40% of the population are employed in Acre, Haifa and the Krayot. There are currently only direct bus links to Tel-Aviv, journey time ca. 3 hours; a combined bus to Acre and then train to Tel-Aviv cannot compete due to many rail

delays and poor timings.

Netanyahu's plan speaks of a \$0.67 Billion double-track 23km. line along the adjacent road alignment, travel time to Tel Aviv would be cut to 75 minutes. This proposed line has already been declared a National Project, the planning has been completed and it can be put out to tender immediately, according to the Prime Minister's sources.

The mayor of Carmiel, Mr. Adi Eldar, is a great supporter of the plan and says "The proposed line is a long-term futuristic vision for the Galilee." On the other hand, the Finance Ministry claims that the best solution for this short section would be an LRV line (probably train/tram) between Haifa, Carmiel and Nazareth, which would also serve many Arab settlements along the route who currently have no public transport services. (This is the project presented by the former Transport & Roads Safety Minister Shaul Mofaz.) The big advantage of an LRV is city-centre to city-centre link, unlike the proposed Heavy Rail link which would involve a station outside Carmiel. According to the Ministry the cost of the LRV line would be the same as for Heavy Rail, but since most of the users would not be heading for Tel Aviv, a train capacity of 200 passengers would be sufficient.

**(c). Kiryat Shemona** is located at the extreme northern (and eastern) Galilee, near the Lebanese border. It has a population of 22,100 inhabitants, most of them employed in the city or nearby; unemployment rates are neither significantly high nor low. The only public transport link is by bus with Tel Aviv, which takes 3.5 hours.

The mayor, Mr. Nissim Malka, says, "A city can only develop with proper transport services; unfortunately this city has neither air nor rail links. It is here that a rail link is desperately needed more than anywhere else. Factories are not built due to high transport costs to and from the port of Haifa. The rail link will bring the city a revolution!"

The Government Office for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee is promoting a plan to build two railway lines to Kiryat Shemona; one will be an extension from the planned line between Acre and Carmiel, the second would be through the Golan road junction (located at the geographical border between the Upper and Lower Galilees) and Rosh Pina (in the Upper Eastern Galilee.) The Minister for Development of the Negev and Galilee, and Prime Minister's Assistant-Director-General Mr. Silvan Shalom, said "The Eastern Galilee including Kiryat Shemona are not step-children, and should enjoy the same services that are provided to the centre; rail service is not a privilege and the Eastern Galilee must be developed and made accessible in order to encourage the population."

Whilst Mr. Shalom estimates the plan as costing \$1.08 Billion, the Finance Ministry claims that the real cost of the two lines would reach \$3.24 Billion; it is entirely unnecessary and very complex both from the design and the environmental aspect due to the fact that its alignment would pass through Nature Reserves; instead, road interchanges on all roads leading to Kiryat Shemona should be built, as well as adding extra lanes to these roads where needed.

**(d). Afula;** Located in the centre of the Jezreel Valley and considered its main city, it sits on the alignment of the former almost-mythical Hedjaz railway and has a population of almost 40,000 inhabitants, many of whom work in areas north-west of the city.

Currently the only public transport link is a bus, journey times 140 minutes. There is a 'wall to wall' consensus amongst the city's and regional populations regarding the contribution that could be made by a rail link. Unlike Eilat there is no air service and much travel time could be saved. Others say that the Finance Ministry's 'so-called reason' regarding the economical inadvisability of building the line is a major irritation, and actually divides the population into two groups, one worth investing in and one not. Netanyahu's plan is actually a revival of the Hedjaz Line between Haifa and Beit Shean with five new stations along the alignment at a cost of \$0.81 Billion, and travel times of 100 minutes between Afula and Tel-Aviv. The Ministry of Finance, which often opposes rail plans, claims that building the line will cost \$1.19 Billion and only 3% of the area's inhabitants will regularly use rail service; it prefers to invest in creating 3,500 new jobs annually by encouraging business. [How? And how will these people travel?]

It is to be noted that the Finance Ministry also ignores, for some unknown reason, the freight traffic potential. The budgetary battle between the two Ministries has just begun and we must await developments.

A later Report from Aharon, incorporating a press release of 22.02.2010 by the Transport & Road Safety Ministry:-

"Prime Minister Netanyahu and Transport Minister Yisrael Katz today briefed the press on their ambitious plan "Israel Ways", which refers to an investment of about \$7.2 Billion. [Note - this is already half of the original proposal!] This will take place in two stages, from 2010 to 2020, and 2020 onwards. As far as railways are concerned, the first stage will include:-The new 23km. line between Acre and Carmiel; the revival of the Jezreel Valley line between Haifa, Afula and Beit Shean at a cost of \$0.9 Billion, works on each of these to begin in 2011; Advanced planning for revival of the former abandoned 'Eastern Line' between Kfar Sava and Hadera East (to include

rebuilding, double-tracking and realignment also of the section between Lod and Rosh HaAyon South currently used for freight trains only - the new alignment would be mostly alongside Highway No. 6; advanced planning for a fourth track along the Ayalon line (between Tel-Aviv HaHaganah and Universita stations); and electrification (at last!) and purchase of rolling stock for electrified lines, to cost \$2.9 Billion. This brings the first stage to \$4.7 Billion.

The second stage, from 2020, speaks of the long-dreamed rail link to Eilat on the Red Sea, a railway line along the whole alignment of Highway 6, and a rail link between Carmiel and Kiryat Shemona, i.e. between Lower and Upper Galilee.

The plan also mentions proposed travel times on the new lines, e.g. Carmiel - Haifa (about 44km) 32 minutes; Carmiel - Tel-Aviv (136 km) - 92 mins non-stop, or 117 mins. semi-fast; Beit Shean - Tel-Aviv 102 mins. fast, 127 mins. semi-fast.

In a later Ministry press release of 24.02.2010 the government formally approved the first stage of the \$7.2 Billion 'Israel Ways' plan - of which the Railways receive \$4.7 Billion for the projects listed above. In addition the Railways will receive \$4.2 Billion from the current budget of the Transport & Road Safety Ministry."

The Finance Minister Mr. Yuval Steinitz did not participate in the government discussion on the plan, since he had demanded a much smaller budget. (It appears that the Finance Ministry's traditional view over the years has been of Railways as an inefficient, unprofitable and outdated mode of transport - presumably 380km/h in China is not progressive enough? A.G.) In the meantime Netanyahu has instructed the railways and the Transport Ministry teams to work at full pace on the detailed design of the lines to Eilat and Kiryat Shemona, entirely ignoring the objections from the Finance Ministry. [It will be noted that work approved for Stage 1 involves lines more in the centre of the country than at the true 'periphery!']

#### **(xv) - MORE ON THE DEVELOPMENT PLANS.**

A press release of 10.03.2010 by Isra-Rail Co. repeats some of the above information but adds more important details:

The Government decision of 24.02.10 was No. 1421; "to build an intercity land transportation infrastructure from Kiryat Shemona in the north to Eilat in the south; to include railway trunk lines as well as highways; additionally there will be transverse (east-west) railway lines and

highways. The Government has instructed the responsible Boards to start the immediate implementation of the following rail projects as Phase 1 (2019-2020):- Revival of the Hedjaz Railway line between Haifa, Afula and Beit Shean at a cost of \$0.92 Billion; Acre-Carmiel line at \$0.92 Billion; both lines with full grade separations, bridges etc. Both lines enjoy an approved detailed national infrastructure plan status. Electrification and rolling stock at \$2.21 Billion & additional \$0.81 Billion for electrification and rolling stock for line to Carmiel."

Phase 2 includes:- Lod - Hadera East line revival on a new alignment alongside Toll Highway 6 - this line is in the final approval stage and will soon join the status of those already approved; Hadera

- Afula; Yagur (on the Hedjaz line) to Ahihud - connection to Carmiel; Upper Galilee line between Carmiel and Kiryat Shemona; Afula - Tiberias and Haifa - Nazareth lines. All these latter are still only at the preliminary design stage but are included in National

Plan No. 23.

In the south, in addition to the intensive upgrading of the Tel Aviv - Beer-Sheva line, and the new line between Ashkelon and Beer-Sheva, the following lines are included in National Plan No. 23 and are being moved from preliminary design to detailed design stage: The Cross Israel line, by-passing Beer-Sheva, to run between Lehavim, Shoket and the Negev Junction to run alongside toll highway No. 6; Beer-Sheva - Arad; Beer-Sheva

- Yerocham; and the long-awaited line to Eilat.

The following points are very important:- For the first time in the history of Israel, the implementation will be by the National Roads Company and the Cross-Israel Company - both road-builders

- rather than by the Railways, due to their proven ability in carrying out large construction projects as opposed to the Railways' poor ability. Additionally, the two companies named have rich experience in land acquisition and judicial matters, particularly due to the fact that many of the planned railway lines are to run alongside roads that they have built.

- The Railways have been instructed to cooperate and coordinate with the two companies, including consulting, where needed, in building the railway lines.

- The railways have been further instructed to prepare themselves to receive the rolling stock not later than the dates for the opening of the new lines as well as completion of electrification of the various existing and new lines.

- The Government has also instructed all involved parties to design all the lines

(including the one to Eilat) for speeds between 150-200km/h.

- The Government will also create a special Higher Steering Committee, to deal with these subjects and to be legally authorised to carry out compulsory land purchase where needed.

One can say that this is the first Government ever to recognise the urgent need for expanded rail transport as a core national infrastructure need and one can only hope that the plans will be pursued to a successful conclusion - even against the wishes of the Finance Ministry!

Following the approval of this national plan for a network of lines and highways, the Knesset Economics Committee headed by MK Mr. Akunis visited on 21.03.10 the IR depot at Haifa East and the Central Control Centre 'Masua' at Haifa Hof-HaCarmel. MK Akunis stressed that the government policy had enormous social significance and the Finance Ministry's attempts to stop the process would fail!

#### **(xvi) . MORE LECTURES.**

Scientists on the Track - third lecture series: Passengers on the Tel- Aviv - Haifa line on Monday 1 February 2010 had the chance to hear a special lecture on "breakthrough service light brain". This is on a new technology, called "Aoftogenetika", which will allow in the future the repair of a damaged retina in the eye and the treatment of diseases such as Parkinson's, epilepsy and depression, by stimulating the brain using light. Lecturer was Prof. Idan Segev, a Hebrew University brain researcher. This was the third in a series of lectures by senior Hebrew University on passenger trains entitled: "Teaching on the tracks". The 45-minute lectures are at no additional charge beyond the price of ticket. This one was held on Train No. 148 (dep. Tel Aviv University 09.25), and Train No. 109 southbound, dep. Hof HaCarmel 10.22.

#### **(xvii) . REHOVOT ANNIVERSARY.**

The northern parking area at Rehovot (Ehud Hadar) station was to be temporarily closed on 28.02.2010 due to ceremonies opening the city's 120th. anniversary.

#### **(xviii) . GENERAL MANAGER RESIGNS!**

From an IR press release of 16.02.2010: "General Manager Yitzhak Harel (,Haki') today announced his resignation, saying: 'Isra-Rail Co. Ltd. is currently assessing its activities for 2009. An analysis of the data shows impressive growth and positive changes in all areas, which are a direct result of moves I have made, supported and assisted by the management. During this period the Railways have moved forward, their status changed from a government department to a service and business-oriented company while keeping strict integrity and clear administration.

Today I can say with satisfaction that all the targets placed before me when I began my job at the railways have been achieved, and therefore, after completing thirty years in the public service, I would like to accomplish some personal aims in the private sector. I am confident that the foundations laid for the company's further management will help it in the future.'

He added the following message for passengers: 'Dear Passengers, Railway Management is not an easy job - on the contrary, it is hard and unremitting; the railways are undergoing an enormous development with an ever-growing demand for their services every year. As the General Manager I have been - and still am - active in improving service to passengers; during the last two years we have signed an \$8 Billion development agreement, as well as the purchase of a further 31 push/pull coaches in order to resolve the congestion on Sundays and Thursdays characterised by the high number of soldiers using trains. Production and assembly of these trains normally takes between 18 and 24 months, and the railways expect to receive them in time for opening the line to Rishon leZion West as well as completing works of double-tracking and upgrading the line to Beer-Sheva.'

Both Transport & Roads Safety Minister Mr. Yisrael Katz and the Railways' Directorate urged Mr. Harel not to resign, but to stay on due to the challenges expected for the railways in the coming years, but after thanking the minister he confirmed his determination to resign.

The Directorate will meet in a few days to form a committee to find a new manager; Mr. Harel will leave his position in May 2010, until which time he will cooperate with the Ministry and assist in any way. He has received many expressions of goodwill on his new way forward.

#### **(xix) . BRIDGE REPLACEMENT.**

On Friday 12.03.2010 there will be no service between Tel -Aviv University and Bnei-Berak stations due to works on replacing the old railway bridge over Rokach Avenue; consequently services will run only between Kfar-Sava and Bnei-Berak stations; the railways will provide a free shuttle service between Universita and Bnei-Berak stations. (See Tender below).

#### **(xx) . HOD HASHARON STATION RENAMINGS.**

Due to requests by the public living in Kfar-Sava, Hod HaSharon and the surrounding area, the name of Hod HaSharon station (named after Kostyuk) will be changed to Kfar-Sava Nordau Station (Kostyuk); the existing Kfar-Sava station will be renamed Hod HaSharon Sokolov. The new names reflect the nearby streets.

One wonders how long it will take for people to get used to these renamings! They were due to take effect from the new

timetable on 06.03.2010.

**(xxi) . SERVICE CHANGES.**

Due to works on building the line between Tel-Aviv and Rishon-LeZion West, there will be changes to certain trains running between Hod HaSharon Sokolov and Tel-Aviv HaHaganah stations in each direction. Southbound trains departing 06.20 and then at each full hour from 07.00, as well as the 21.20, will terminate at Tel Aviv Savidor/Central. Those northbound trains normally starting from HaHaganah at XX:06 will instead (commencing with the 07:06) start from Central at XX:14.

**(xxii) . LEVEL CROSSING SAFETY CAMPAIGN.**

Towards the Passover holidays IR has started a 3-month nationwide campaign to increase the awareness of level crossing dangers amongst drivers, pedestrians, school children, shepherds, mini-tractor drivers, horse riders and all others who cross rails at level crossings, and to teach them the correct and safest way. The \$0.8M campaign includes posters along streets as well as on buses and bus stops, all carrying the slogan "Sneaking through level crossing barrier arms causes death."

The campaign is an integral part of the activities to increase safety on trains and around the tracks, in addition to technological devices being installed at level crossings: the campaign aims to internalise this topic within the community. The behaviour of pedestrians, and especially car drivers, in highly problematic in Israel. In 2009 there were 300 cases of breaking the barrier arms at level crossings, by drivers crossing them after the bells and flashing lights had started; the number is similar to previous years. These drivers who violate the law put at risk not only their own lives but also those of hundreds of passengers on trains that pass.

Research recently prepared by the Railways unveils some worrying findings, including:- Only 14% of the drivers who participated in the research think that crossing the railway tracks at level crossings with bells and flashing lights activated is the most dangerous traffic offence.

- Around 7% of the drivers who participated knew personally drivers who violate the safety regulations at level crossings.

- 2.5% of the drivers - which actually means thousands of them - admitted that they had personally violated traffic regulations at level crossings during 2009.

These findings indicate that most Israeli drivers are unaware of the risk to life and limb created by such violations. In addition to the campaign and the installation of detection devices at crossings, the Railways have completed the construction of sixteen Grade Separations (enabling the elimination of level crossings) during 2009, while an additional four level crossings will be eliminated in 2010.

**88:05.**

## TENDERS.

**(i) . Tender No. BZ/MT/10/09. Providing Management Co-Ordination, Planning and Implementation Control services for construction of the new Railway Management building and its surrounding area, including a parking area, the station building and its surroundings, and other areas at Lod station/depot complex.**

The contract will be valid from the date of signature by the winning bidder until completion of work by the construction sub-contractors. Latest bids by 08.02.2010.

(Note: This is the second historical change of the General Management's location; in the 1980's it moved from Haifa Central to Tel Aviv Central (Savidor).)

**(ii) . Tender No. BN/KB/03/09. Upgrading and enlarging the Depot for Siemens push-pull trains at Haifa East location.**

To include: Earthworks, excavations, filling with sealing material and tamping, tamping of foundations, stabilizing of foundation by using crushed stones; roadbeds and ballast; asphalt in tracks; sanitation & sewage and drainage installations; concrete casting, sealing with wood, carpentry frameworks, electricity, communications and very low voltage works, plastering, paving and covering, aluminium, air-conditioning, framework painting, fire-fighting, area development, trackworks in upper and lower structures, removal of existing buildings, demolishing and dismantling, and compressed-air installations. The tender comprises four projects:

1. Service building.
2. Tracks.
3. Enlargement of depot
4. Changes at existing depot. Implementation time is 44 months, bids by 02.03.2010.

**(iii) . Tender No. SN/MT/09/09. A Lawyers' Pool for providing Legal Advice services.**

The number of lawyers needed for the various services are:-Tenders and administrative litigation: 4. Civil litigation: 4. Labour laws: 3. Municipal Taxation: 4.

Design, Building, Environment and Business Licensing: 3. Land, Property & Expropriation: 3. Damages: 3. Criminal: 2.

The contract is for 36 months with optional extensions for an additional 36 months. Bids by 10.02.2010.

**(iv) . Tender No. HN/KB/17/09: Building Grade Separation No. 244 over the Na'an - Kiryat Gat line, replacing the existing Level Crossing on Road No. 411.**

Works include: Preparation, dismantling and treatment of nuisances, earthworks, roadbeds, paving, traffic arrangements, drainage, culverts & ditches, an overhead road bridge and supporting walls, landscape rebuilding, electric supplies, extending foundations, cathodic protection, various works, moving of water pipelines, treatment works on the abandoned road, and track infrastructure works (option). Including the following structures:-

- (i) . Road 411: Upgrading the existing level crossing.
- (ii) . Road 411 Km. 3.922: temporary bypass.
- (iii). Road 411: Km. 3.922: Final road surface.
- (iv). Road bridge on road 411 between Ekron and Khulda at km. 3.922
- (v). Option: Track or road alignment.

Implementation time: 14 months; Bids by 22.02.2010.

**(v) . Tender No. MS/RC/2010/02. providing Taxi Services to/from Haifa Hof-HaCarmel station.**

The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months. Bids by 16.03.2010.

**(vi) . Tender No. HN/KB/14/09. Overhead Road Bridge A-1 on Road No. 40 and agricultural road bridge A1-1, both over the line to Beer-Sheva, and a**



**railway bridge over Karkur Creek.** Works include: replacing an old bridge by a new one; earthworks, culverts, drainage etc. Implementation time: 21 months; bids by 08.04.2010.

**(vii).Tender No. HN/KB/01/10: Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Lighting Equipment for level crossings and along roads which are under the Railways' responsibility.** The contract is to be divided between two bidders, each responsible for one area (north and south.) The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Bids by 25.03.2010.

**(viii). Tender No. HN/RC/01/09. For supply of 2,6000 Steel Sleepers and Fastening Accessories. Bids by 08.04.2010.**

**(xix). Tender No. HN/KB/03/10. Repairing the Railway Embankment between Rokakh Ave. and Yarkon on the Tel-Aviv University - B'nei-Berak section. To include: Uncovering embankment, removal of trees, dismantling, waste disposal, excavation of existing embankment, building a new one, including geo-synthetic networks and plastic segments, roadbeds, ballast and ditches. Implementation time: 6 months, Bids by 255.03.2010.**

**(xx). Tenders MC/RC/02/09 and MC/RC/03/09, for Double-Deck push-pull coaches and Diesel-Electric Locomotives respectively, have had the dates for submissions extended first to 15th. April 2010 and then to 13th. May!.**

**(xxi). Tender MS/RC/2010/3. Operating stands for coffee, cakes and other kosher food and drinks stand at Herzliyya station.** 2010/4 is the same for Kfar-Sava Nordau St. station; 2010/5 is the same for Rosh HaAyin North station. The three contracts are for 12 months with optional extensions of up to 24 additional months in each case. Bids by 15.04.2010.

**(xxii). Tender TK/SR/15/09. Providing maintenance and installation services at signalling, level crossing, electric cables and communications facilities over the entire rail network, according to current needs.** The contract is for 36 months with optional extensions of up to additional 72 months. Bids by 10.05.2010.

88:06.

## LIGHT RAIL.

### A. JERUSALEM.

Eye Witness Accounts. Tony Travis wrote on 28.01.2010: "Overhead wires up along the Jerusalem tram route near Ramat Eshkol. I saw



them this morning for the first time. But still a way to go."

Sybil wrote on 01.03.2010: "Big excitement in Jerusalem last Wednesday (February 24) at 10 p.m. I was not there to see it... The first railcar left the depot and trundled 2 km along the tracks as far as

Ashtrom wired the first section of line between the French Hill junction and Ammunition Hill, some 3km. During the coming months, and together with the progress on other works, the whole 13.8 km. double-track Red Line with its 1000 catenary poles will be wired, and the catenary will then be placed under power.



*Photos: Sybil Ehrlich*

Ammunition Hill. I went up there the next day to see if anything was doing, and since the track was strewn with building materials and other stuff it was obvious that nothing would be moving that day. The City-Pass spokesman told me that this week they would also be running trains during the hours of daylight."

Aharon sent a factual report based on information from CityPass and the Transportation Master Plan teams:-

"On 24.02.2010 an historic event took place; as part of its preparations for the safety tests for the LRV's and their systems to be carried out in the coming period, the Israeli Electric Company as subcontractor for the concessionaires Al-stom and

That day, at 21.30 and after two gongs had been rung, the first LRV left the depot to start its maiden test run between the depot and Ammunition Hill. It was accompanied by dozens of CityPass, Municipality and Master Plan engineers and hundreds of excited citizens who found it hard to believe that the first train was really running on rails under its own power. Many car drivers left their cars to observe this wonder, while police secured the road junctions. The test runs are being carried out parallel to the completion of works, thus being the final stage prior to the full

commercial operation at the beginning of April 2011.

The test runs consist of three main stages:-  
Checking the Trains. At the beginning of the process one train will be checked on this 3km. section; work will be focussed on the train's various systems, and will last for three months, during which all 46 trains will be checked, each train for two weeks. Trains will be seen at different parts of the section at different periods.

- Checking the Line Section. Three months after checking the first train, the various sections of line will undergo checking and tests by trains running along the whole length.

- Final Test Runs. Once the second stage is completed, and all trains and systems checked over the various sections of line, the final test runs will start and will last for 45 days, at the end of which the public services will commence.

The tests will be carried out strictly by engineers of Alstom, CityPass and the Transport & Road Safety Ministry, which makes the final checks and author-sation. Due to the fact that Jerusalem citizens have no experience with an LRV, signs warning them of passing trains and catenary poles (!) have been placed all along the alignment, giving also details of the times of test runs.

The municipality's General Manager Mr. Yair Ma'ayan and CityPass General Manager Yair Nave both stressed the significance of this historical moment."

Sybil Ehrlich wrote: - On Wednesday March 10th. I went up to Givat Hatah-moshet (Ammunition Hill) to see if there was anything to see, with no expectations at all. I know the railcars don't have any set timetable so it's a matter of luck. I saw there was a train in the Givat Hatashmoshet station so I ran and photographed it before it got away. It was surrounded by crowds of security people who nearly had a collective heart attack at the thought that I might try and cross the ribbon barriers. I asked how long it would be there and if I could see it move off. I was told they were waiting for another one to arrive, "any minute now" or alternatively "within an hour". I decided to wait and see if the other one turned up. There were cellphone reports that it had left the depot but there was "a problem". They said the trains are not moving under their own power but are being hauled by a lorry for now, during the preliminary testing. After about half an hour, I saw coming down the road from French Hill a motorcyclist with lights blazing. The security people all sprang to life. "It's coming!!!" Then there was a platoon of police cars, as if it was a royal procession, and more security people shooin everybody out of the way. One picture shows the second train being drawn into the station by the



lorry. (The lorry was subsequently uncoupled and drove off the track. I forgot to notice whether it was staying around to take either or both the trains back.) One picture shows men examining the track for something after the second train had passed. I noticed that the station isn't nearly as pretty as it was when I photographed it in February 2009. The station name boards and the maps have all been removed.

**B. TEL AVIV.** Although the project is stuck from the constructional point of view, due to an inability to finalise the financing, the management has published Tender 2010/008 for providing aerial photos in order to have some follow-up on the Red Line alignment and to prevent invasion of the planned alignment. Bids by 25.03.2010.

# BACK TO THE TIRAT-YEHUDA BRANCH

By Amith Ben-Shalom

More than ten years after Paul's article (49:17) about the quarry-line to Tirat-Yehuda, my curiosity led me to look around the old route and to find out what remained of it.

My exploration began near Givat-Koah, where now the route is a dirt road just behind the backyards of the farms. Within a few kilometres, the line becomes blurred and a huge wall of thistles and thorns almost hermetically blocks the way southward.

After crossing the renovated east-west road, near Bareket, the line is more-or-less obvious, but not easily accessible to the visitor. The area of what was the sorting/shunting yard is abandoned, but hundreds of concrete sleepers are left behind on the route.

The convoluted narrow north-south road that once bisected the line between the quarry and the sorting-yard had been replaced by a modern multi-lane highway.

Thirty-six years ago, back in 1973, my brother Rami took a picture of me standing on a Decauville loco and on a General-Electric 45-ton loco, that were abandoned on the east side of the line, just behind the old road crossing. When I was looking around, seeking for the exact crossing point, I suddenly came across a rusty covering plate, at the exact place where those two locomotives had been, that have since been removed to an unknown place. Is that plate an engine cover of one of those locos?? Probably it is !!

At the entrance dirt road to the quarry the rain had exposed a rail that is covered above it.

Here and there are giant concrete traces of the quarry facilities, such as crushers & ramps.

A recent article about the locomotives of Ashdod port was published in IRR 198, pp 394-399.

Pictures:

(If not stated, taken by the writer, 2009)

- 1. The Decauville loco and the General-Electric 45 ton loco, pictured in 1973 by Rami Ben-Shalom.
- 2. The dirt road at Givat-Koah.
- 3. The "jungle" along the route.



- 4. The curve near Bareket.
- 5 + 6. Quarry general view, standing on the entrance rail-route from west.
- 7. The rusty plate (note the twisted rail behind)
- 8. The sleepers at the sorting/shunting yard.
- 9. The embankment ramp. 10. The sorting/shunting yard area.



# THE PLYMOUTH LOCOMOTIVE HAS DISAPPEARED !!

(Amith Ben-Shalom)

The unique loco which was plinthed at the Oyster-Ranch south of Eilat, had disappeared after the ranch was closed, few years ago. The place now is abandoned, and only a single box wagon remained here, together with another one not far away, at the Camel-Ranch.

The locomotive is known to have operated at the "Yuval-Gad" factory near Ashqelon, between 1950-1970 approx., and was of standard gauge, powered by a diesel Caterpillar engine. Does anyone know what happened to it?



**Pictures:**

1. Painted in black, 1997 (Chen Melling)
2. Painted in Yellow, 2003 (Amith Ben-Shalom)
3. Had gone !! 2009 (Amith Ben-Shalom).

## OTHER MIDDLE-EAST RAILWAYS.

**A. QATAR.**

From

**88:09**

Nr. 01/2010, p. 39. (Translation by Editor). "Our Know-How is in demand world-wide."

It is one of the largest foreign projects in the history of the Deutsche Bahn; DB will be a partner with the Qatar Railways Company in the construction of one of the most modern railway systems in the world in Qatar. Planned are a Metro network for the capital Doha as well as long-distance and freight lines. Some 17 Billion Euro will be invested. Dr. Rudiger Grube, the head of DB, signed the formation contract for the Qatar Railways Development Company in Doha on 22nd. November 2009. DB is involved to 49%, the Qatari State firm Qatari Diar to 51%. The planning and management company will lead the development of the railway organisation as well as all planning and construction measures.

The Metro system envisaged for Doha will have four lines with 98 stations and a length of 300 km. In addition a 180km. high-speed line to Bahrain is planned, laid out for a maximum speed of 350 km/h. A 100-km. line in the direction of Saudi Arabia will be laid out for 200 km/h. 325 kilometres of line for goods traffic are planned, which will also be used by passenger traffic.

'Mobil', the in-house DB magazine,

On his return from Doha Dr.Grube spoke with 'Mobil':-

"What did you think, as you first saw the newspaper headlines regarding the Billions project?"

"We are first of all proud, that the DB was chosen as exclusive partner for such a Megaproject.- It is unbelievably motivating when you are there and you experience directly how much the know-how of our workers is valued. They do a marvellous job. And when these activities abroad help us in economically-difficult times to maintain jobs in Germany, then the whole country benefits."

"Is the decision in Qatar part of a worldwide trend towards Rail?"

"I am convinced of this. Almost a quarter of the global CO2 emissions are caused by the transportation sector. And fossil fuels will become increasingly limited. Countries with a capacious railway system will have clear advantages in competing in

the medium future. For the worldwide mobility and logistic markets climate-friendly transport modes that also save scarce resources will become part of the elementary questions for the future. And in this respect the Railway is the best."

"Can the Project in the Near East open the door to other large contracts?"

"In the coming two decades investment in the Arabian Peninsula in construction and improvement of railways will reach a three-figure sum in Billions. The DB wants to be involved here from the outset and to set the standards."

## **B. DUBAI.**

'C.R.J.' No. 160 p. 80: Dubai Metro. The new fully-automatic light metro system was scheduled to open on 9th. September 2009. A visitor on 9th. February (2009) saw one of the 5-car units being tested on track along Shaikh Zayed Road. The line will be operated and maintained by Serco, and the UK Office of Rail Regulation has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority to ensure rail safety. The Red Line runs parallel to the coast, and the subsequent 22.5km. Green Line, due to open in March 2010, will run on both sides of the Dubai creek. There will be two interchange stations, at Al-Ittihad (Union) square and at Burjuman. The main depot is at Rashidiya. Rolling stock will consist of 64 five-car sets built by Kinki Sharyo in Japan, with seating for 400 passengers and standing room for many more. They will provide standard-class 'Silver' and first-class 'Gold' accommodation, and have a separate section for women and children."

## **C. EGYPT.**

### **(i). CONTROL.**

From 'C.R.J.' No. 160 (Winter 2009/10) p. 75.

"In June 2009 the US Trade & Development Agency awarded a US\$ 658,323 grant to Egypt's Ministry of Transport to support the development of a positive train control (PTC) system for Egyptian National Railways. PTC technologies and systems are expected to improve safety on ENR, and increase the capacity of the network.

At the end of June, GE Transportation and ENR announced the completion of commissioning 80 Evolution Series locomotives. These locos represent a \$400M investment over eight years, and since introduction they have been successfully hauling freight and passenger trains. This is ENR's first order for locos with electronic fuel injection, which has proved to be superior to mechanical injection and will reduce ENR's fuel consumption significantly. In addition to being more fuel-efficient, the locos also generate significantly lower emissions than the rest of the fleet."

**(ii). ACCIDENT.** Marc Stege-mann sent the following translated from the NS staff magazine 'De Koppeling' of 22.01.2010: (possible source: ANP)

"Eight employees of Egyptian Railways have been sentenced for causing a serious railway accident. Near Cairo, a passenger train ran at full speed into a train which was standing still. Shortly

before this accident, the first train had made an emergency stop after a collision with a buffalo cow. The driver of this halted train appeared to have remains of cannabis in his blood. He was sentenced to the longest term: 7 years imprisonment. The driver of the passenger train was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment. The accident caused 18 casualties."

### **(iii). VIDEOS.**

In [World-Diesel-Loco@yahoo.com](http://World-Diesel-Loco@yahoo.com), Philip Wormald" wrote: A great short video clip showing the big new ugly but fantastic sounding GE's on this link

<http://www.rail-videos.net/video/view.php?id=7950> .

To which a Mohamed responded:

"Here are the full videos from dashloc caught in Egypt."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNdWNpxUIOs>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4BeYg4QZT8>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ICv8WsyR7w>

[The video clips are fascinating for myself, as Editor, who has never been to Egypt. The trains pictured are either roaring through suburbs or departing and arriving from a major terminus like Rames; passengers (almost all men) are hanging in open doorways, casually disembarking as the train is still weaving its way over the points, or sitting out at the rear vestibule over the buffers! Men are walking across the tracks in all directions as light engines and trains move constantly about. The rolling stock involves a vast number of 'Eu-ropean-type' bogie coaches, with opening doors and windows, and painted in a variety of liveries - two-tone blue, two-tone blue and white stripe, clean, ex-works with white roofs, blue/grey white with a dark-blue wavy stripe on each side, not symmetrical but if two coaches are marshalled together the wavy line can continue (but doesn't always), blue and yellow... and yet with one exception - a diesel multiple unit with some coaches in red/black and some in blue - the sets seem to be consistent. (Do the different liveries have any specific meaning?) Station pilots include GM Bo-Bo's and centre-cab bo-Bo's similar to the IR 'Yo-Yos'. Train locos are GM Co-Co's (also in a variety of liveries), Modern GM (Class 66'-type) Co-Co's which are lower than the stock, Henschel Co-Co's and the

### **הרכבת**

new GE mid-blue Co-Cos, which tower upwards looking so tall for the track gauge and with almost a 'Pharaonic' expression on their cab fronts.... ]

**D. ERITREA.** (From C.R.J. 160, p. 175).

"Motive power for a tour group in March 2009 comprised Mallets 440.008, 442.55 and 442.59 and 'Littorina' No. 2, but 442.54 failed before the tour started. On Sunday 8th. March the weekly tourist train was seen on its return from Nefasit to Asmara, composed of 440.008 and a single passenger carriage, but on the following Sunday it was cancelled owing to a lack of bookings. The small

shed at Ghinda has been closed, and all locos and passenger carriages are now based at Asmara. Serviceable steam locos, in addition to those listed above, were 0-4-0T 200.002 and, following repair, 442.54; under active repair were 202.010 and 442.56. Serviceable diesel locos and railcars were 27D, Drewry 2079, 'Littorina' No. 2 and 'Ural' No. 1."

## **E. SUDAN.**

It remains a moot point whether Sudan truly belongs to the area covered by 'Harakevet', but owing to the links with Bert Dyke and various military railway units in the Second World War we have from time to time mentioned the railways here. In 'C.R.J.' No. 160 p. 77 (which itself refers to scant and brief notes in issues 126 and 136) is a report from this tragic and troubled country, of April 2009. "No public train timetables were available, but it was found that there is a weekly train north from Khartoum to Wadi Halfa, departing on Monday, arriving on Tuesday evening, and returning from Wadi Halfa on Wednesday morning with an arrival at Khartoum on Thursday evening. Journey time appears to be about 36 hours. There has been no passenger service between Atbara and Port Sudan since approximately 2007.

There is a Khartoum - Atbara service running nightly, departing at 21.00 and arriving at 06.00, with no sleeping cars or air-conditioning in the formation. The return journey is at similar times. Some tracks within Khartoum have been rerouted recently compared with maps published in the 1960's, a 2005 map still showing the original routing.

On the Dafur line, a train runs fortnightly to Nyala, departing on Sunday and scheduled to take four days, though it may take up to seven days each way. It was seen arriving back in Khartoum on 4th. April, preceded by a security train of two passenger coaches with an armoured vehicle on the rear. The public train was formed of 13 vehicles with a generator car at the front. The train was filled to capacity and powered by two American-type diesel locos. The outward service was seen on 12th. April, with approximately 15 ve

hicles, again full to capacity in the 45deg. C heat."

**F. IRAN.**

**(i). CLOSING THE GAP.**

From 'C.R.J.' No. 160 p. 80:-The new RAI Bam - Zahedan line "opened on 17th. June 2009, with the first commercial train on 23rd. June, thus closing the gap in railway communication between Europe and India. Initially, at any rate, there is no passenger service between Bam and Zahedan, and freight is conveyed in containers, which will help mitigate the difference in gauge between Iran (1435mm) and Pakistan (1676mm). The new RAI station at Zahedan is to the south of the airport, near, but not adjacent to the PR station."

**(ii). LUCK OF THE IRISH.**

It appears that a poster in the centre of Tehran showing President Ah-medinajab and bearing the slogan (in farsi) "The country is moving forward like a Train" actually bears (to the amazement of one knowledgeable onlooker) a picture of an Irish Railways Class 181 diesel loco! (One is reminded of the way British HST's appeared on leaflets and posters on Israel Railways for a period.)

**(iii). RAILBUSES.**

"What goes around.. "

It is always a surprise and a pleasure to see 'Harakevet' being cited as a source for information - the Editor got a sudden start when reading 'Today's Railways UK' No. 96 (December 2009), an article by Chris Booth on the 'BRE-Leyland Railbus Concept' (pp. 34-43). For the sake of completeness here is the entire relevant section from p. 39, including the element of (self-)quotation.

"The first 2-car unit, 141.001 was formally handed over by Philip Norman (Managing Director of British Rail Engineering Limited) to John Welsby (Director of BR Provincial Services) in a ceremony at the BREL works at Litchurch Lane, Derby on 22nd. September 1983..... 19th. March

1984 saw the official handover of a class 141 to West Yorkshire at .. Leeds station. 141.006, the first in the new Verona green and buttermilk livery... The Leyland TL11 engine and the SCG gearboxes soon began to give problems, in particular with the electronics. The Westinghouse brakes also gave cause for concern as the cables that had been used began to stretch, which gave reduced efficiency ..... These problems led to a decision to give the fleet a major rework operation, carried out by Hunslet Barclay at Kilmarnock in 1988 and 1989. Four years after construction and without ever seeing revenue-earning service, 141 001 had been extensively robbed of parts to help keep the other 19 units in service at Neville Hill (Leeds) ..... After refurbishment the units were reclassified as 141/1 and renumbered 141,101-120, although not in order as the opportunity was taken to match the final digits of the unit

numbers with those of the vehicle numbers ..... and was repainted into WYPTE-

'METRO TRAINS' livery of red with a broad cream band and thin yellow band .....

The 141's led a pretty mundane life, not being liked much by the public and certainly treated with disdain amongst the enthusiast fraternity, until the time came for replacement .....

Most of the class became surplus to requirements when the Aire Valley lines were electrified and were gradually

stored..... by December 1997 the last one in service was 141.113, while 141.119 had been at Neville Hill all that month awaiting repairs. 141.113 was finally taken out of traffic at the end of the winter timetable on 23rd. May 1998 and returned to Porterbrook Leasing....

In May 1996 Serco acquired 141.105/112/118 from Porterbrook for conversion into weed spraying units for use on branch lines. The idea was for one car to hold the water supply, the other the chemicals in three cylindrical containers. Only 141.118 was actually converted and painted into the Serco livery of red and

grey. It was given the name 'Flower' .....

In contrast 141.116 was moved by road from Doncaster to the Fire Services Training Centre on a former airfield at Moreton-in-Marsh in Gloucestershire in October 1999; there it stood on a section of track surrounded by vehicles on a fictitious section of motorway, all this being for training purposes. This unit and 'Flower' were later sold to Iran, as described below." [But it is not. Ed.]

"By early 1999 the Class 141 units (now owned by Porterbrook Leasing) had been stored at several locations. Cotswold Rail were contracted to sell 141.

101/102/106/107/108/109/ 111/114/ 115/116/117/119/120. A large advert was placed in the railway press in June and July 2000, and interest was shown by the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (IRIR). As such Cotswold Rail sold nine members of the class at this time to IRIR for \$100,000 each, including refurbishment. The units involved were 141.102/107/109/111/114/ 115/117/119/120, and they were prepared by Adtranz at Doncaster, being made operational but not repainted unless necessary for damage to panels. Spares from Railpart were also made available. They were moved by road from Doncaster and arrived at Immingham Docks in December 2009. Six of them were seen in board ship on 24th. January 2001.

It was said at the time that 'the reason why IRIR purchased them is apparently simple - the railway needs every vehicle it can get; passenger traffic is increasing in double-digit rates and the Iranian industry isn't able to produce such quantities of rolling stock, so they are buying whatever can be pressed fairly immediately into service. It could even be that suburban services are

being planned for a city other than Tehran, but at present this is unclear.'

In Iran the plan was for them to be used to operate newly-introduced suburban services across the centre of Tehran. The first S-Bahn from Tehran to Karaj was officially opened to service on 20th. April 2000, following a limited introductory service from 7th. March. From September the trains would operate every 20 minutes between 05.00 and 23.00. It was said that 'they would offer new standards of comfort and accessibility, as passengers could simply board and purchase tickets on the train.' The livery was not much changed initially, mainly the removal of the WYPTE and BR symbols and the application of 'Wasp' stripes on the coupler area, along with two new headlights, one either side of the central cab window. In October 2005 three of them were photographed on Tehran depot, two of which were undergoing modification and a heavy overhaul, which included a new mainly green livery. This photo was in the December 2005 issue of Harakevet, a quarterly journal devoted to news on the railways of the Middle East, edited and published by Rabbi Walter Rothschild. Rabbi Rothschild comments: 'They are used only sparingly as they are classed as unreliable.'

As far as can be ascertained some of the class are still working today but an expert on overseas railways, Phil Wormald, has asked countless people about the units and come up with very little new information. According to Colin Marsden there was a picture in a holiday guide published in 2008 which showed two of them in a station. He also says that certain enthusiasts seem to think one or two might have been 'destroyed'. If anyone has any further information on these units, please forward it to the author via the publisher."

(This would be Platform 5 Publishing in Sheffield - editorial(platform5. com, though the editor of Harakevet will also be happy to pass any information on.). It is noted that BREL received export enquiries for such units from several countries, including Turkey and Iraq.

Disposal Details of the units includes the following relevant information for the units sent to Iran:

Set No.	DMS	DMSL
	Reworked No.	
	55502	55522
141 001	141 102	
	55505	55525
141 004	141 105 *	
	55507	55527
141 006	141 107	

	55509	55529	141 008	141 109
	55511	55531	141 010	141 111
	0	55534	141 013	
141 114				
	1	55535	141 014	
141 115				
	2	55536	141 015	
141 116 *				
	3	55537	141 016	
141 117				
	4	55538	141 017	
141 118 *				
	5	55539	141 018	
141 119 *				
	6	55540	141 019	
141 120				
	7	55541	141 020	
141 101.				

Note: this is thirteen, not nine units! An asterisk indicates one not in the original list of units sold by Cotswold Rail. Units 141 116 has been described as being used for Fire Service training, 118 was

the 'Flower' weedkilling unit..... but it is unclear how and when these were sold to Iran.

Two photos accompanying the article show a pair of the units in red/cream WYPTE livery at Tehran depot in November 2005 - by Alessandro Albe; and three in an attractive two-tone green plus white band and white roof livery, in summer 2007, by Toma Bacic. It seems from the latter that the entire lengthy UIC number is carried on the sides.

#### (iv). NEW DIESEL LOCOS.

From 'Eisenbahn Kurier' No. 450, 3/2010, p.19.

"Siemens builds the 'Iranrunner' ER 24. Siemens and the Iranian State Railways (RAI) signed a contract in December 2006 for the construction of 150 Diesel locomotives, the contract being worth around G450M. These would be of Type ER 24 PC 'Iranrunner'. The contract involves in the first phase the supply of 30 complete locos produced at the Siemens works in Munchen-Al-lach; in the second phase is a technology transfer for the construction of the remaining 120 locos in Iran, over a period of a further six years. Siemens' partner locally is Mapna Locomotive Engineering and Manufacturing Company (MLC), a subsidiary of the Iran Power Plant Projects Management (MAPNA).

This loco type ER 24 PC, seen now for the first time in Germany, is a new member of the Siemens Mobility family, now a well-proven diesel-electric Eurorunner family with modular arrangement of the machine room and equipment. The 'Platform' concept of this diesel loco was so developed as to allow a maximum amount of variations to suit conditions and customer requirements with the minimum amount of extra problems - to include profile, gauge, power pack, tractive effort and top speed. These

Bo-Bos have a driving cab at only one end, and this conforms to the standards established by TSI-Crash, as already fitted to the six-axle ER 20 CF for Lithuania as well as the four-axle electric locos of CP Class 4700 for Portugal and the SNCB Class 18 for Belgium.

The type MTU 16V 4000 R46L diesel motors for the Iranian locos develop up to 2,400 kW power and enable a top speed of 160 km/h. The 87-ton loco has a starting effort of 270kN and as a special feature does not have central energy supply equipment (ZEV); the supply of energy to passenger trains will instead be arranged through Generator Coaches in the train."

In 'Lok Magazin' 03/2010 p. 18 is a picture of one of the new locos in Munich, and the Arabic numbering is explained as '1502'; presumably this was the second (or third) of the series.

#### G. SAUDI ARABIA.

##### (i). MECCA - MEDINA.

(Taken from the Port2Port web site, thanks to Evyatar Reiter):

The British management company Scott Wilson has won the tender and will accompany the British railway project between Mecca and Medina. The company will provide consulting services, multifunctional to all aspects of railway infrastructure planning, design, project management, construction supervision etc. to the Saudi Railway Organisation (SRO) project to connect the two Moslem holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The contract is worth 89.8M Saudi Riyals (\$24M) and includes the preparation of tender documents, and analysis of financial and technical offers and compliance with international standards.

Saudi Railways has also signed an agreement with a group, Al-Rajhi Consortium for the local civil engineering infrastructure works for the railway project between Mecca and Medina, a distance of some 450 miles, worth 6.7 Billion Riyals (\$1.8 Bn.) The final tender for the project will be published in March 2010 and will include a construction and operation period of twelve years.

##### (ii). STAINLESS STEEL VARNISH.

It is amazing what one stumbles across. The September 2009 issue of 'Rail-fan and Railroad' has an article (pp. 46f.) by Walt Lankenau on the restoration of an historic 1930's stainless-steel 'Zephyr' train at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union. This includes:-

Budd delivered this set "to the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad in late 1936 as one of two six-car 'Twin-City Zephyr' trainsets running between Minne-apolis-St. Paul and Chicago. They replaced a pair of three-car Pioneer Zephyr copies built in April 1935 and numbered 9901 and 9902. The new 'Twin Zephyrs' were powered by separate shovel-nose diesel locomotives rather than by power cars articulated with the cars, as the earlier trains were. ElectroMotive built locomotives 9904 'Pegasus' and 9905 'Zephyrus' for the train, and soon a seventh car was added to each consist. EMC/Budd No. 9904.... powered the set that runs today at IRM. Its cars were named after the female Greek deities: 32-seat auxiliary power/cocktail lounge car 'Venus', 60-seat coaches 'Vesta' and 'Minerva', 56-seat coach/16 seat dinette 'Psyche', diner 'Ce-res', 19-seat parlor/one drawing room 'Di-ana', and 24-seat parlor observation 'Juno', and so the consist was known as the 'Train of the Goddesses'. Its counterpart, the Train of the Gods,

of course was made up of cars named 'Apollo', 'Mars', 'Neptune', 'Cupid', 'Vulcan', 'Mercury' and 'Jupiter'.

The Trains of the Gods and Goddesses operated successfully on the 'Twin Zephyrs' until November 1947..... Afterward the two trainsets were replaced by new, Vista-Dome equipped Budd consists..... and were reassigned to the Chicago to Lincoln, Nebraska, 'Nebraska Zephyr'. For this service, two cars were removed from each consist - 'Diana', 'Psyche', 'Cupid' and 'Mercury'.

The IRM acquired the Train of the Goddesses in September 1968, along with EMD E5 (built 1940/1). The Train of the Gods was sold to Saudi Arabia around the same time."

Does anyone know more? One must assume all reference to pagan deities will have been removed before shipping, plus anything that looked like a cocktail bar

#### H. TURKEY.

(i). On 25th. January the following appeared on CercleFinance.com: According to my highly reliable translator, it means: "It seems that Alstom is currently doing all it can to get an order from TCDD for 80 electric locomotives, according to "Lettre de L'Expansion" (a weekly newspaper mostly about financial & economic news.) If the builder wins this bid worth more than 280 millions Euros, 8 locos will be assembled in France, the remaining will be assembled in Turkey by a subsidiary of TCDD, explains the Expansion"

##### (ii). POWER HAUL LOCOS.

From 'Today's Railways UK' issue 96, Dec. 2009: p.61: An article on the first of the new Class 70 PowerHaul locos for Freightliner in Great Britain reports that the first two locos were on their way from the General Electric Transportation plant at Erie, Pennsylvania, to Britain. "These are the first locos sold into the European market by GE Transportation. In December 2008 the company announced an agreement to supply Tulomsas (the privatised workshops of the Turkish State Railways) with the necessary technology and material to assemble PowerHaul locos in Turkey for the European, Middle East and North African markets."



## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

### (i). SUBMERGED LOCOS.

The February 2010 issue of 'The Railway Magazine' has an article (pp.18-20) by Philip Atkins and Mike Hudson - apparently a follow-on from earlier articles - on steam locomotives that are known to have been sunk at sea. It includes four photos of the relics of the 8F 2-8-0's sunk in the Red Sea on the SS 'Thistlegorm'.

Another brief note is worthy of inclusion here simply because there are researchers who use 'Harakevet': It concerns "the reputed loss of four London & South Western Railway Adams 0-6-0's en route for the Middle East aboard the SS 'Arabic'. Although this story appears to have originated at least as far back as the 1950's, and is widely-known, we can reveal that it is in fact a myth, for the 'Arabic' was torpedoed on August 19, 1915,

off the Irish coast, whereas the four 0-6-0's LSWR Nos. 0105, 0165, 0404 and 0406 - were not even withdrawn from traffic by the LSWR until almost three years later, in April 1918. They were indeed shipped abroad, but all four safely reached their destination and later operated on the newly-formed Iraqi State Railways in the 1920's. The reason for their association with the 'Arabic' is unclear."

### (ii). LOCOMOTIVES OF ASHDOD PORT.

An illustrated article of this name by the late Paul Cotterell z.l. appeared in 'Industrial Railway Record' No. 198 (September 2009), pp. 394 -399. Copies may be ordered by post from S.C. Robinson of 47, Waverley Gardens, London NW10 7EE four about 4 Pounds.

Following is an edited part of the text - from which the Editor certainly learned much!

"In the decade following the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948, it became clear that the relatively large port of Haifa and the tiny port at Tel Aviv were inadequate to meet the needs of the country. Accordingly a major new port was built at Ashdod, being opened in 1963....."

One photo (by Hans Kohut) shows a concrete stabilising block, thought to have been for a breakwater, hauled by a four-wheeled diesel which presents a problem of identification. Decauville seems to be the prime candidate ..... and it bears a certain resemblance to SNCF Type Y 6021 Locotractors, though there are noticeable differences."

A Decauville List indicated five 220 / 120hp locos went to 'Societe Nationale de Travaux Publics, a Haifa', and one 220 hp to 'Union de Travaux et d'Entreprises', Haifa.

"The second customer appears to be Solel Boneh which fits the French description, but I cannot think who the first might be. [i.e. Public Works Dept. WLR.] The reference to Haifa may be the port of arrival rather than the headquarters of the two companies.

Theo Pelz of Haifa, who visited Ashdod Port in May 1960, noted that two types of locomotives were then in use, both having been built by Decauville. The larger of the two he recorded as being similar to the SNCF Y-7000 series; the smaller type of locomotives seen were numbered 43, 44, 46 and 47 (series possibly incomplete) and Theo thought they resembled SNCF Y-6000 locotractors..... "

"Stone for the construction of Ashdod Port was brought by rail from a quarry at Tirat Yehuda. (Article in 'Industrial Railway Record' 124.) Israel Railways laid track from a new junction at Rinatya into the quarry, part of the formation having been constructed by the British Army for a 2ft. 6in. gauge line in World War 1."

A second photo "shows loading operations at Tirat Yehudah about 1962 with what is thought to be one of the smaller Decauville Locotractors. It is shunting several Israel Railways (ex-WD) bogie flats with the skips which were specially built for this stone traffic. Standing alongside is EMD G12 Bo-Bo 110 of Israel Railways which will take the train of loaded skips out to Rinatya for reversal to Ashdod. The quarry branch was closed with the cessation of stone traffic.

While the precise number of locotractors employed in building Ashdod port may be queried, it is evident they were insufficient, and at least two General Electric 45-ton 0-4-4-0 diesels also saw service there (Nos. 34442 and 34446 of 1962.) (I have a note of a third member of this class in Israel, 34907, thought to have been built in 1964 - if correct, then this would have arrived too late to help in construction work.) Apparently all three 45-tonners were supplied to Solcoor Incorporated, a name with which I am otherwise unfamiliar. It may be a combination of Solel Boneh, the trade union-owned construction company, and Coor Industries, and perhaps was used jointly by them for the Ashdod port project only. One of these GE locos was later bought by Negev Phosphates...(and used at Oron)"

..... "Nothing has come to light of the disposal details of the other locomotives, however

an unconfirmed rumour suggests that a number of locomotives were once stored at the terminus of the now closed branch line to Bet Nabella, with an inference that these may have come from Ashdod port."

"In 1998 Ashdod port handled much rail-borne traffic, particularly desert phosphates. Within the port area, internal shunting of mineral wagons belonging to Negev Phosphates was carried out by that company's own locomotive... EMD-built

Class G18W Bo-Bo 778052-1 of 1978.

Running number was officially 001, although I cannot recall it being carried. Livery was bright yellow with maroon lightning flash and lettering. Israel Railways provided a substitute locomotive while 001 was out of action.

In the summer of 1990 a coal terminal was opened on the northern edge of Ashdod port. Imported coal was unloaded from ships onto a conveyor belt for transport by Israel Railways to the new Ruten-berg Power Station near Ashkelon. These were the only trains on Israel Railways to use centre knuckle couplers and an EMD Class GT26CW-2 3000hp turbo-charged Co-Co (IR 701) was purpose-built for this dedicated merry-go-round service. At the Ashdod terminal trains were shunted by an unusual machine... an Elbram Train Pusher Mk. V., built by B.M.H. of South Africa in

1988, maker's number CMZ/M 5046. The initials N.C.S.C. were carried on what I assume to be the lower cabside. Livery was grey, with light blue lettering and stripes at the top and bottom of the side body. Warning stripes were black and white. I was told that propulsion was not via the wheels, but through an arm .... which grips the rail. Progression was by a series of short surges. Not surprisingly the locomotive quickly gained the nickname of 'grasshopper'.

Another company which shunted its own rail traffic within Ashdod Port was Rotem Fertilisers. In the summer of 1994 it acquired ... a SW1000 switcher of which little is known. It is said to have been bought through Canada Allied Diesel of Quebec (presumably agents or dealers) and may have been built by General Motors in London, Ontario, rather than by EMD at La Grange. Carrying number 007 and bright yellow livery, it was photographed by Yaron Dozetan on 7th. August 1994 shortly after entering service at the port..... "

Relevant to this article is of course Amit Ben-Shalom's memoir of the Tirat Ye-hudah branch in the 1960's and today in this issue.

### (iii). HARAKEVET INDEX.

It was a hell of a job, but the Ha-rakevet Index is now complete up to and including issue 87 (end of Series 22). The Contents Index is now in three parts - Issues 1 to 48, 49 to 69 and 70 to 87 - and

all can be sent electronically as rich text

format files if required, free of charge. If anyone wants a printed version - well, there are a lot of pages to photocopy and post, and I cannot give an exact price yet, but it could be done.

#### **(iv). BIRKENAU.**

Relevant in the broader context of 'Harakevet' - a former Deutsche Reichsbahn goods van has been placed as a memorial on the tracks at Auschwitz-Birkenau. An article in 'Ha'aretz' 24.01.2010 p.A4 describes the search for a suitable vehicle

- which is due to be officially dedicated at Yom HaShoah in April; it represents also a change in policy, through new members of the management team, inasmuch as until now it had been the rule that nothing was to be brought to the museum that was not 'authentic' due to having been on site when the camp was liberated.

The search for a suitable original vehicle lasted two years, and was eventually brought to a successful conclusion by Micha Limor, a journalist, who was able to track down a van standing in a field near Wessum, near the German-Dutch border

- "The owner of the car, a local doctor and train aficionado, said he had bought it from British soldiers in 1990, shortly before they left Germany. The British used it for storing tools, but he hoped to restore it and make it a museum exhibit when he had the time and money." It had been built in 1921 and research indicated it had indeed been used in deportation trains from Hungary during the War. A firm 'Die Schmiede' was tasked with some initial restoration, following which the wagon was brought by road to Auschwitz on 15-17. Sept. 2009.

#### **(v). MODEL OF ROD LOCOS.**

Tony Travis advises that Bachmann is planning to produce a 4mm OO version of the Great Central Railway 8K (LNER 04) 2-8-0 locomotive, as used by the Railway Operating Division in the First World War and hence referred to as 'ROD's' when they were used in the Middle East by the military in the Second World War.

#### **(vi) : BACKGROUND TO THE IC3's.**

In 'Today's Railways' No. 115 (July 2005) p. 35 is:-

"(The story of the Spanish TRD units)... dates back to late 1985 when Danish Railways (DSB) ordered 23 3-car articulated DMUs with four powered bogies from Ascan Scandia. Known as IC3, these units have a top speed of 160 km/h, lively acceleration (1m/s<sup>2</sup>) and powerful braking (160 km to rest in one kilometre), with microprocessor train control. Their most striking characteristic is their cab ends, which are surrounded by a massive rubber ring. When the sets are running in multiple (up to five sets), all intermediate cab ends, including windscreen and console, are swung through 90deg. and neatly folded away into cabinets, thus providing wide inter-car gangways the length of the train. Rapid coupling and uncoupling is possible. In Denmark this is necessary - a five-unit set departing from

Kobenhavn comprises portions for four different destinations - Sonderborg, Esbjerg, Struer and Frederikshavn.

Delivery of the DSB IC3s ran late, with on-board software teething troubles compounded by the bankruptcy of ABB Scandia, its subsequent restructuring as Scandia-Randers A/S, and finally by the incorporation of the rail industry sector of ABB in Adtranz. The first commercial services started in January 1990..... "

#### **(vii). PRESERVATION PROPOSAL.**

Worthy of recording, though there is as yet nothing much to report, is an attempt by Alon Siton to arouse sufficient interest within Israel to retain for preservation enough former Esslingen railcar units to provide a full set, for possible use even on tourist trains along the old Jerusalem line. He has listed the remains, some of them only partially complete or even rebuilt as hauled stock. Although the Editor supports such ideas enthusiastically, we are not in a position to help in a concrete manner, and the Railway Museum in Haifa under Chen Melling as Deputy Director also suffers from lack of resources and help from 'at the top'. This is an issue which occurs also in other countries - a multiple-unit or a train set is, by definition, a 'set' and not just an individual vehicle; yet whilst it is sometimes possible to preserve and restore a single coach (or wagon - see above), the idea of a complete set of two, or three, or five or more vehicles - an entire 'TEE set, for example - is much more difficult. And one needs a cab unit at each end. But once an item has gone, it has gone.. for ever. So one hopes the idea is not wholly dead.... and we will continue to report on any developments.

#### **(viii). SYBIL'S ADVENTURE.**

On Sunday 17.01.2010 Sybil Ehrlich wrote:-

"Just got back from an exciting day (Sunday January 17). My plan was to get a train to Ganei Aviv and explore the area around Sarafand Junction and if possible to walk along the old Sarafand trackbed. I got the 11:23 from Beit Shemesh. As we neared Lod there was an announcement that the train would terminate at Lod because of a "takala bema'arechet" (system breakdown). That was OK as far as I was concerned because I was changing at Lod anyway. Arrived at Lod on time, 11:56, and I expected to wait till 12:30 for the train to Ganei Aviv. I went up on the footbridge and to my amazement I saw trains coming and going on the inland line! A north-bound train came in on platform 2 and was announced as Haifa and Nahariya

only, passengers for Tel Aviv should go to platform 4. The train from Beit Sh-emesh went back at 12:11.

So I went to the stationmaster's office to find out what was going on. Someone had flung himself on the line at Azor, causing all this disruption, so some trains were not going via Tel Aviv. 12:30 had come and gone, and so had a train for TA calling at Kfar Chabad. I asked the stationmaster when the next train to Ganei Aviv would be, and he said 13:30. That's OK, I can happily spend a few hours up there on the footbridge.

At 13:20 I went to the loo on platform 1/2, and when I came out there was a Siemens train in platform 2!!! And there was an announcement that the train on platform 2 was for B'nei Brak, Binyamina, Atlit and Haifa. By the time my brain registered this properly, it was too late to buy a ticket for B'nei Brak and hop aboard. I missed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to go via Rinatya (Rantiyeh) to B'nei Brak on a Siemens. I'm still kicking myself. By this time it was total chaos in the stationmaster's office with angry passengers demanding to know what was going on and could they get a refund, and telephones ringing in all directions. I got a word in to ask when there would be a train to Ganei Aviv and he said he didn't know. I asked whether there would be another train via Rina-tya to B'nei Brak within the next hour and he said no. So I decided I'd had enough, and walked to Sarafand Junction (site of). I found a couple of bridges on the Sarafand branch, very close to the junction, and it was easy walking along the embankment all the way out to Road 44, from where there are buses to Beit Shemesh. On the way I saw a man on a horse. We exchanged a few words, and I said I was walking along the old trackbed and did he by any chance know when the track had been lifted. He said years ago, "12" years". I realised that 12 was just a number plucked out of thin air, and he could have said three years or 43 years. Anyone know? Incredibly, the line is still shown on maps published in 2008.

Coming back on the bus, we stopped at 16:40 at the old level crossing in Ram-le (the one to the south of the old concrete station) and a Siemens bound for Beer-Sheba went across! Whether this is now standard or was because of the morning's disruption I have no idea."

## DECAUVILLE SCULPTURES AT THE SHARON REGION

### (Amith Ben-Shalom)

The Sharon region is well known because of its famous citrus-orchards. For railway-enthusiasts, it is more important that many Decauville remains exist in that lovely area. Many of these wagons have become monuments, scattered in public gardens here and there.

The common denominator of these De-cauvilles is that they were all converted by Yigal To-markin, a famous artist in Israel.

The biggest collection of wagons is located at Burgata, a tiny village ("Moshav") about 15 Km. east of Netanya. 15-20 wagons are scattered on the large lawn garden. Some of them consist of a complete wagon and others use just parts of wagons, such as wheels or chassis or even sectioned parts.

I have identified some wagons/wheels as Hudson-made, others are Krupp-made, and others have no name on at all (maybe Israeli made). All the wagons are plinthed on short rails/sleepers section, of several types. One rail is unique, as it contains a "Sultan-Blessing" originally from the Hedjaz-Rail-way, probably from Rakevet Ha'emek. In addition, a standard gauge bogie of a WWII American "lend & lease" bogie wagon is plinthed to one side. Not far from the garden, at Tomarkin's abandoned workshop, there are a few more wagons, wheels, rails, sleepers etc.; most of these are parts of unfinished items.

Back to Netanya, another of Tomarkin's Decauville sculptures is placed near the "Yad-Lebanim" site ("Sons Memorial"), based on the famous Kappa's Spanish Civil War picture, and uses a single Krupp axes & wheels.

Southward to Herzliya, another Hudson wagon is plinthed at a Yad Lebanim site, painted blue.

Other Tomarkin Decauville sculptures are located at Kochav-Ha'Yarden ("Belvoir" crusader castle), also in front of the Haifa Science Museum, at Jaffa ("Abu Nabutt park") and maybe at other places. Any additional information will be helpful !! [Editor notes - also one near Spichernstrasse U-Bahn station in Berlin!]

The origin of those Decauvilles is unknown to me, but I heard somewhere that they came from the Israel Electric Company, where Tomarkin's father was employed.



