The Sri Maharacha Timber Co Story - The End …? Page 30

The company once had an extensive stock of little industrial locos, of amazing variety, sourced from England, Germany & from its managing company - Borneo & Co. Most of these were acquired secondhand & it's quite remarkable so many of them survived into the 1990's ! Sadly, only 4 are confirmed survivors today, as the mattress factory has closed & the site cleared, the whereabouts or fate of their locos is not known.
I have been fortunate in obtaining copies of notes, records & some photographs made by just a small handful of European railway enthusiasts, dating back to 1946. This has enabled me to produce what I think must be the most complete list to date (see below), of the fascinating locos, that once worked this company's lines.

Running N° & Name/s	Type	Manafacturer	W/N°	Built	Notes
1. NANG NOI	0-6-0T	not known	6155	1909	converted to i/c petrol
2. KOH LOI	0-4-0ST	Kerr Stuart	2387	1915	ex-Borneo Co. Preserved at Pattaya. *
3. SI RACHA	0-6-0ST	Brush	290	1903	disused before 1972. RF says W/N° 299
4. HUBBON	0-4-0ST	WG Bagnall	1687	1902	with Baguley valve gear [a]
5. ELSEY (ASHLEY)	0-6-0ST	Andrew Barclay & Son	816	1898	supplied by the builders as "ASHLEY"
6. NONG KHOA (RAYONG)	0-6-0	Orenstein & Koppel	5335	1912	ex-Borneo Co. Preserved at Si Racha. *
7. RAYONG (PANAS)	0-6-0	Orenstein & Koppel	11789	1928	Operational in 1971. *
8. BRUANG (SINGHA)	0-4-2ST	Hudswell Clarke	900	1909	ex-Labuan Coalfield, Borneo. *
9. SING-AH (BRUAY)	0-4-2ST	Hudswell Clarke	367	1890	ex-Borneo/Central Borneo Co. *[b]
10. CATERPILLAR	0-4-0PM	Brookville	-	19xx	with Caterpillar engine - hence its name
11. HUDSON	0-4-0PM	HEC	4046	1948	
12	0-6-0T	Henschel	22401	1952	Preserved at Pattaya *
13 skipped as unlucky	-	-	-		number not used
14	0-6-0T	Henschel	22402	1952	Preserved at Si Racha
15	0-6-0T	Henschel	29426	1956	ex-Chonburi Sugar Mill.RF says N°25426[c]
16	0-6-0T	Henschel	29581	1956	ex-Chonburi Sugar Mill [c]
17. Railcar	-	not known	-	-	
18. (NONG KHOA)	0-6-0 ?	Orenstein & Koppel	11186	1926	renumbered 3
-	2-4-0.	Orenstein & Koppel	3493	1909	50hp loco - Walschaerts valve gear [d]
-	Shay 2+2	Lima	2808	1914	in 1946 only the boiler remained [e]
2. Railcar	-	locally made	-	-	
18. Railcar	-	locally made	-	-	

John Blyth (author of "Industrial Locomotives of Thailand" - Continental Railway Journal No.107, 1996), visited the site in the early 1990's, as did R.S.Murphy in 1992 & both made detailed notes of what they found. These included the locos above & also a wooden bogie coach on steel frame with end balcony & wide windows, two 2-axle tenders one with steel canopy, a wooden passenger coach with 4 small windows, an 0-6-0 RMC 6 cyl. Diesel loco, plus the remains of three 0-4-0 others & an 0-4-0 GMC petrol engine loco (No.11?)

2013 current survivors.

These locos were all noted & photographed by Rob Boer on his 1993 visit - current whereabouts not known !

The late Basil Roberts visited the sawmill in 1971/2, photographing many of these locos (* operational in 1971)

These locos were seen on the company premises in 1946 by Alan Elyard Brown & verified by Allan Baker & S.L.S.

Additional Notes to the above table of locos :

[a] Delivered to Howarth Erskine & Co.,Bangkok in 1902 & still bore their title on the tank at SRJ in 1946.

[b] Was **Thailand's oldest loco** & reported by Loco Club of GB in 1996, but **not** by Rob Boer in 1993 or since ?

[c] On dump at old mattress factory without wheels or running gear in 1993.

[d] Consigned to Borneo Co.,via London agent for "Srinaya Timber", but confirmed at SRJ in 1946 - not seen since

[e] A Shay geared loco with 7"x12" cylinders & 27½" wheels - boiler works plate confirmed identity in 1946.

The End …? … maybe not, as someone may yet find more locos or their fate !

The Sri Maharacha Timber Co - The Final Chapter ? page 31

It has been widely documented that this Co's logging operations ceased & the line closed around the early 1970s (Ramaer, Whyte & others), but after further research it seems that this may not actually have been the case. **Manat Boonyai**, former SRJ employee, wrote a detailed article **"HOW IMPORTANT IS A NAME"** in 1987, explaining the origins of the locomotive & station names, to mark the 20th anniversary of the (new?) Company, (1967 to 1987), which now throws more light on the final chapter of this fascinating company & its array of delightful industrial locos. Contrary to what I've already written about this company's demise in preceeding pages, it now seems that some logging operations were still continuing, on at least part of the line, as late as 1987 or after ! Manat also says that SRJ 10, the Caterpillar railcar was still in use as a towing car for workers & food deliveries to the forest camps. SRJs 6 & 7 were also said to be still in service & quite probably, SRJs 8 & 9 although he was not so precise about these. The mechanics had abandoned repairing SRJ 5, due to parts shortage.

In March 1989 all 4 Henschels were still present at the sawmill, another un-named loco on display at the roadside, although in dilapidated condition & 2 other locos stripped as scrap in the yard. SRJ 14 was plinthed in a park near Si Racha town centre. By his next visit to the sawmill in 1991 all these locos had disappeared (they had in fact been moved to the mattress factory site, some 15 kms inland), where they were catalogued by RS Murphy in 1992 & photographed by Rob Boer of Railasia in 1993.



Loco dump at mattress factory 1993



Henschel SRJ 12 at sawmill in 1989

The Henschel locos were the most moden (1952/6) & powerful of the company's loco stock & could pull up to 15 heavy logs at a time, as could the Orenstein & Koppel locos - the smaller locos could only manage 5 to 7 logs. SRJ 12, shown here at the sawmill in 1989, had a deadly history - early in 1957 it was pulling 14 logs from Montri station to the sawmill, when it derailed some 19 km before Si Racha, killing 4 people.

SRJ 5 (ELSEY/ASHLEY) also had a fearsome reputation as with its small boiler, it was often overloaded with between 10-12 logs & consequently emitted huge amounts of sparks, which frequently set alight many lineside houses, with their palm frond thatched roofs. It was abandoned due to unavailability of spare parts.



SRJ 5 (ELSEY/ASHLEY) on mattress factory dump in 1993

It may well be therefore, that the final death-knell for this company's logging operations, as has been suggested by some sources, was indeed brought about by Thailands complete ban on commercial logging, when all government concessions were withdrawn in 1989.

Grateful thanks to Rob Boer for his photos & to Rob Dickinson for the late Basil Roberts Photos.

A copy of Manat Boonyai's 4 page article - "HOW IMPORTANT IS A NAME" can be sent upon request.

The Thailand - Burma Railway
aka
The Death Railway 1943-45

photo courtesy James Waite



Japanese 2-6-0 locos C 5615 & C 5617 at Kanchanaburi Station during River Kwai Bridge Festival week

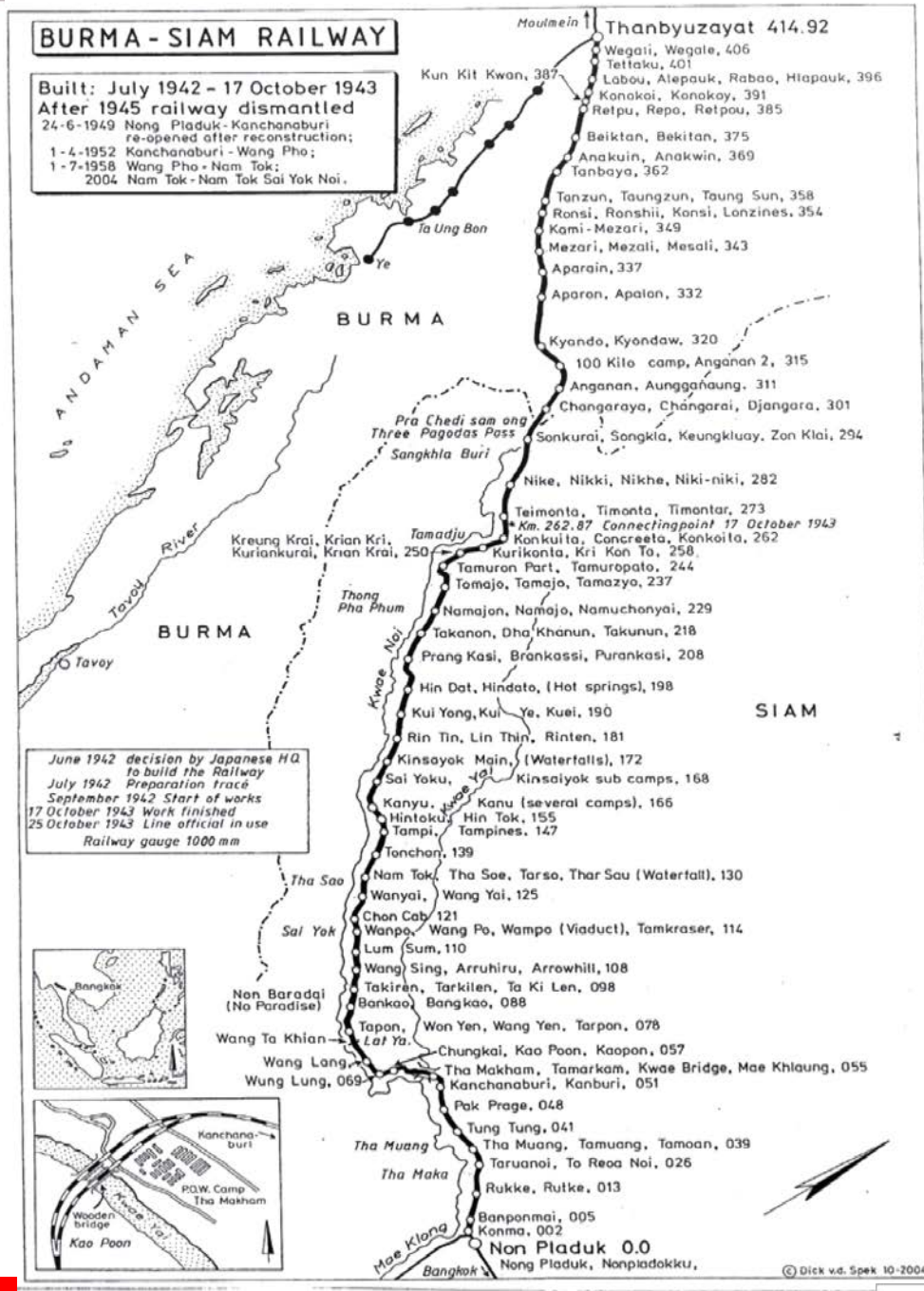
The Thailand - Burma Railway, also known as **The Death Railway** (with good cause !), was a 415 km (258 mile) railway between Nong Pladuk, Bangkok, Thailand and Moulmein, Burma (now Myanmar), built by the Japanese during World War II, to support its forces in the Burma campaign & ultimately, its proposed invasion of India. Forced labour was used in its construction. About 180,000 Asian labourers & 60,000 Allied prisoners of war (POWs) worked on the railway. Of these, more than 90,000 Asian labourers & 16,000+ Allied POWs died as a direct result of the project. The dead POWs included some 6,318 British personnel, 2,815 Australians, 2,490 Dutch, 356 Americans and a smaller number of Canadians & New Zealanders - **"A Life for every Sleeper"** (H.V.Clarke 1986)



Wartime jungle POW cemetery



POWs working on bridge on line


BURMA - SIAM RAILWAY
Built: July 1942 – 17 October 1943
After 1945 railway dismantled
24-6-1949 Nong Pladuk - Kanchanaburi re-opened after reconstruction;
1-4-1952 Kanchanaburi - Wang Pho;
1-7-1958 Wang Pho - Nam Tok;
2004 Nam Tok - Nam Tok Sai Yok Noi.
June 1942 decision by Japanese HQ to build the Railway
July 1942 Preparation trace
September 1942 Start of works
17 October 1943 Work finished
25 October 1943 Line official in use
Railway gauge 1000 mm
Moulmein
Thanbyuzayat 414.92
Wegali, Wegale, 406
Tettaku, 401
Labou, Alepauk, Rabao, Htapauk, 396
Konakoi, Konokoy, 391
Retpu, Repo, Retpou, 385
Beiktan, Bekitan, 375
Anakuin, Anakwin, 369
Tanbaya, 362
Tanzun, Taungzun, Taung Sun, 358
Ronsi, Ronshii, Konsi, Lonzines, 354
Kami-Mezari, 349
Mezari, Mezali, Mesali, 343
Aparain, 337
Aparon, Apalon, 332
Kyando, Kyondaw, 320
100 Kilo camp, Anganan 2, 315
Anganan, Aunggahaung, 311
Changaraya, Changarai, Djangara, 301
Sonkurai, Songkla, Keungkluay, Zon Klai, 294
Nike, Nikki, Nikhe, Niki-niki, 282
Teimonta, Timonta, Timontar, 273
* Km. 262.87 Connectingpoint 17 October 1943
Konkuita, Concreeta, Konkoita, 262
Kurikonta, Kri Kon Ta, 258
Tamuron Part, Tamuropato, 244
Tomajo, Tamajo, Tamazyo, 237
Namajon, Namajo, Namuchonyai, 229
Takanon, Dha Khanun, Takunun, 218
Prang Kasi, Brankassi, Purankasi, 208
Hin Dat, Hindato, (Hot springs), 198
Kui Yong, Kui Ye, Kuei, 190
Rin Tin, Lin Thin, Rinten, 181
Kinsayok Main, (Waterfalls), 172
Sai Yoku, Kinsaiyok sub camps, 168
Kanyu, Kanu (several camps), 166
Hintoku, Hin Tok, 155
Tampi, Tampines, 147
Tonchon, 139
Nam Tok, Tha Soe, Tarso, Thar Sau (Waterfall), 130
Wanyai, Wang Yai, 125
Chon Cab 121
Wanpo, Wang Po, Wampo (Viaduct), Tamkraser, 114
Lum Sum, 110
Wang Sing, Arruhiru, Arrowhill, 108
Takiren, Tarkilen, Ta Ki Len, 098
Bankao, Bangkao, 088
Tapon, Won Yen, Wang Yen, Tarpon, 078
Lat Ya
Chungkai, Kao Poon, Kaopon, 057
Tha Makham, Tamarkam, Kwae Bridge, Mae Khlaung, 055
Kanchanaburi, Kanburi, 051
Pak Prage, 048
Tung Tung, 041
Tha Muang, Tamuang, Tamoan, 039
Taruanoi, To Reoa Noi, 026
Rukke, Rutke, 013
Banponmai, 005
Konma, 002
Non Pladuk 0.0
Nong Pladuk, Nonpladokku,
Kreung Krai, Krian Kri, Kuriankurai, Krian Krai, 250
Tamadju
Pra Chedi sam ong
Three Pagodas Pass
Sangkhla Buri
Thong Pha Phum
Kwae Noi
Kwae Yai
Tavoy River
Tavoy
BURMA
BURMA
ANDAMAN SEA
SIAM
Tha Sao
Sai Yok
Non Baradai (No Paradise)
Wang Ta Khian
Wang Lang
Wung Lung, 069
Mae Klong
Bangkok
Kanchana-buri
P.O.W. Camp Tha Makham
Wooden bridge
Kwae Yai
Kao Poon
© Dick v.d. Spek 10-2004

History : A railway route between Thailand & Burma had been surveyed by the British government of Burma at the beginning of the 20th century, but the proposed route of the line - through hilly jungle terrain, divided by many rivers - was considered too difficult & costly to complete.

The Japanese invaded Thailand in the morning of December 8th 1941, some hours before attacking the American Fleet in Pearl Harbour. After some heroic & fierce resistance in many parts of Thailand, the Thai forces were ordered to surrender. The Thai Prime Minister, Field Marshal P.Pibulsongkram had previously agreed a secret deal with the Japanese, allowing them to occupy Thailand without resistance, as long as they didn't interfere in the country's internal affairs (**shame the Thai government didn't tell their own military !**). The Japanese then quickly invaded Burma from Thailand & seized the colony from British control. To supply their advancing troops & to prepare for the invasion of India, a railway was the obvious alternative to the dangerous sea route. The line was surveyed & the initial estimate was that it would take some 5 years to complete, but following the unexpected early fall of Singapore & the capture of some 140,000 Allied POWs, a vast supply of labour suddenly became available (by this time their swift military success meant they had scarcely enough food & supplies to support their own advancing troops, much less their prisoners !)





Memorial to the 5th Wing Royal Thai Airforce battle losses at Prachuap Khiri Khan

Construction : Work began around the 22 June 1942, starting at both ends with most of the materials, including tracks & sleepers, being brought in from dismantled branches of the FMSR in Malaya & the NIS in the Dutch East Indies. The 415 km route was to run on the east bank of the Mae Klong River from Bangkok until it reached the Khwae Noi River in Kanchanaburi, where it would be bridged & then continue north through the mountains until it reached Three Pagodas Pass, crossing into Burma & then snaking its way out of the mountains to Thanbyuzayat. This river route was ideal because it enabled the Japanese to supply material & labour to build the line, especially during the rainy season, when the roads became impassable. On the 16th October 1943, after just 16 months, the two sections of line met at Konkuita, some 18 kms south of the Three Pagodas Pass, to much Japanese celebration. The Burmese teams built 152 km of track, while those from Thailand a total of 263 km. Most of the POWs were then transported back to Japan, whilst those left to maintain the line still suffered appalling living conditions, as well as increasing Allied air raids.



Trainload of POWs en route to work



bridge construction over Khwae River

The Bridge on the River Kwai - the most famous portion of the railway is Bridge No.277, immortalised by by Pierre Boulle in his book & then in the 1957 Oscar-winning film, by director David Lean. Many claim that the film was utterly unrealistic & did not show what the conditions & treatment of the POWs was actually like - it was however the No.1 box office success of the year, winning critical acclaim as well as 7 Oscars. The town of Kanchanaburi has never looked back since ! - & is a **must visit** for anyone interested in WW2 or railways.



SRT 824 crossing the Bridge en-route to Wang Pho in 2000 - photo courtesy Chris Yapp ©

The first wooden trestle bridge (220m) was finished in February 1943 followed by the 11 span concrete & steel bridge (346m), shipped up from Japanese-held Java, in April 1943. Both bridges were subjected to numerous Allied air raids & the adjacent Tamarkan POW camp suffered badly, with some 100 POWs killed & wounded. Early in 1945 further attacks put the bridges out of action, but repair work continued & they were operational again by the end of May. A final raid by the RAF on 24th June put the railway out of use for the rest of the war.



RAF aerial reconnaissance photo taken end January 1945, shows both bridges intact & operational



Tamarkan Camp adjacent to the bridge, shown here before bomb damage

(see recon. photo & map insert on page 33)







24 June 1945

Not even the POWs could fix this amount of damage ! & the line remained closed not only until the end of the war, but was not reopened until 1st April 1952, from Kanchanaburi to Wang Pho. The bridge was repaired after the war by the Japanese as war reparations, using two angled box sections to replace the 3 semi-elliptical ones, as can be seen today.





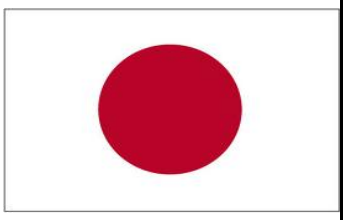
Post War : The line suffered considerable damage during the war & after the Japanese surrender the British Army removed 3.9 km of track on the Thai - Burma border. Control of the line was eventually returned to the Thai government & in the 12 hours between the British pulling out & the Thais taking over - 17 kms of rails, wooden sleepers, telephone poles & wires disappeared in what must have been an all-time record for thievery ! Those steel rails could be bought in shops all over Bangkok for years afterwards (Jorges Orgibet - "From Siam to Thailand "-1982). The track was sold to the Thai government in 1947 & the Nong Pladuk section to Kanchanaburi was relaid & opened 24 June 1949. The wooden bridge was completely blocking the river & had to be dismantled & removed. The next section from Kanchanaburi to Wang Pho was opened on 1st April 1952. The last section to Nam Tok was completed on 1st July 1958 & was subsequently extended 1.5km to Nam Tok Sai Yok Noi around 2003/4, where the line now ends. All beyond here has long since been abandoned, with the exception of a short section laid as part of the memorial in "Hellfire Pass" (aka Kannyu cutting) to the 69 men who were beaten to death by Japanese & Korean guards in the 6 weeks it took to build the cutting. Many more died from cholera, dysentery, starvation & exhaustion. Part of the route has been restored as a walking trail beginning at the Australian built museum, above the cutting (not for disabled persons)



The portion of the line in use today from Thonburi Station in Bangkok to the end of the line at Nam Tok Sai Yok Noi is about 132 kms (81 miles), taking nearly 5 hours, **but worth every minute !**

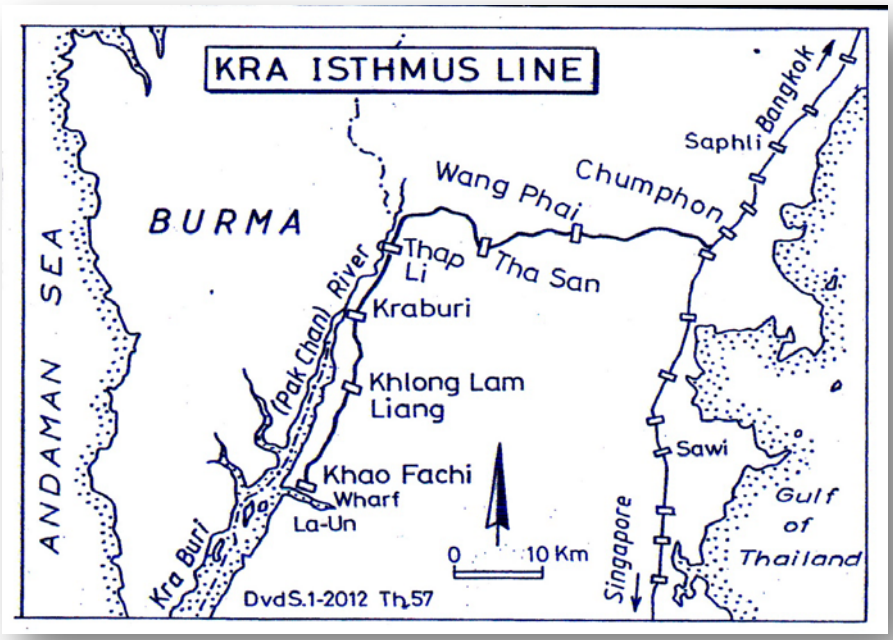






This 90 km line across the Kra Isthmus, at Thailand's narrowest point, linked Chumpon on the east coast to Khao Fachi, on the Pak Chan river estuary & thereby the Andaman Sea at Ranong. Much less well known than the infamous "Death Railway", probably because it was built by coolies & not POWs, it was nevertheless a vital link in the Japanese transport system in Thailand, linking the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean. Like the Thailand - Burma Railway, it was exclusively a military line under Japanese control .

Plans for a canal or railway across the Thai peninsular had long been muted, since the 19th century, but never came to fruition until the Japanese invasion during World War II. The Japanese felt that this line would help them defend the Isthmus from the expected Allied attack, aimed at separating their forces in Thailand & Burma from those in Malaya. It would also allow quick transportation of supplies & troops for their Burma campaign, thus avoiding the long & dangerous sea route around Singapore & up the Malacca Strait, which was targeted by Allied submarines. Construction began on the 1st June 1943 with some 20-25,000 coolie labour (Indians, Chinese & Malays), working day & night, as on the "Death Railway", many succumbing to maltreatment, disease or simply deserting. Nevertheless, the line was completed by November, using rails lifted from the Malayan East Coast line in Kalantan, with 7 new stations & 31 bridges, terminating at the wharf at La Un, Khao Fachi, where there is a museum of Japanese WW2 (?) relics, including a 1950 Hitachi 2-8-2 loco SRT 962, in very poor condition in 2012. The new Museum has been built, but stands forlorn & empty. The line was only used for transporting troops (22,000 by February 1944), embarking on small ships that slipped north towards Rangoon.



At its peak in July 1944, 15 trains daily were using the line. The Allies made two notable air raids on the line & shipping in the estuary on 26 November 1944 & on the 19 March 1945. After the war the British lifted the track & equipment, returning them to Malaya. Today, sections of the formation are still visible from Highway 4, which parallels the old line & several Japanese air raid & storage tunnels still exist nearby.



La Un Khao Fachi

SRT 962 Hitachi 2-8-2 No.2054 built in 1950



Thailand's newest railway line & latest operational locomotive - opened 11 December 2012



Japanese loco - Kyosan Kogyo N° 10089 built 1959
seen here in it's previous home in The Railway Hall of Fame, Chatuchak Park, Bangkok - which sadly closed it's door for the final time on the 23 October 2012. It was one of three locos, N°s 10088-90, reportedly ordered by the Sri Maharacha Timber Co., but for some reason the company never took delivery. Nothing more is known until 1991 when this loco was accidently found in an old riverside shed in Bangkok, in an unused state, when it was preserved in the museum. Former curator, Chulsiri Viryasiri, the loco's owner, perhaps anticipating the museum's future closure, decided in 2010 to have the loco restored to working order for a private railway project he was planning in a resort near Khorat.

Some 3 years later, the loco resurfaced at the well known **Thong Somboon Club,** located just 4km N of Pak Chong, with it's Northeastern line station. Seen here in one of two stations on this line, the loco now provides rides to tourists around the huge resort's many attractions. With it's 2 stations, stone-arched river bridge, embankment & cuttings, this 2.5 km line gives passengers a true flavour of the train travel of yesteryear. Chulsiri says that future plans include extending the line to 6 km, along the forest at the base of the adjoining hill, where a mountain-bike course is due for construction in 2014. The loco has been cleverly & surreptitously adapted to run off compressed air from a compressor, hidden in the replica tender. This means the the loco is available upon demand at peak times, without the need to light a fire & get up steam !



loco with 4 replica wooden coaches in main station



inside loco cab



Looking back towards resort from 2nd station

The line opened, with much fanfare during this Wild West-themed resort's annual 2-day Cowboy Concert on 11th December 2012 & has already become one of it's main attractions. Details of this resort can be found on the Internet at : **www.thongsomboon-club.com** & they can be contacted at : **talkofthewestthongsomboon@yahoo.com**
Resort owner Polpoj Polcharoenkiat, aka Khun Orr or McGyver, welcomes all rail enthusiasts to visit & inspect his new railway, Thailand's latest line, of which he's justifiably very proud - his staff & family made me very welcome !

Final whistle for The Railway Hall of Fame in Chatuchak Park !



museum entrance

A sad day indeed, not just for us railway enthusiasts, but for all Thais, when this privately run free museum closed it's doors for good on 23rd October 2012 - ironically, 23 years from it's opening, on Chulalongkorn Day, especially as King Rama V is regarded as the father of Thailand's railways. Founded by Sanpasiri Viryasiri, who died in September, the museum was managed by his son, Chulsiri since 2004. The land is owned by The State Railways of Thailand, who it is thought had been trying to repossess the site for a number of years, as was the case of the adjoining Chatuchak Market, which caused considerable public outcry, earlier in the year. Interestingly, SRT's original museum was housed here.

This free museum was run entirely by volunteers & it was never allowed to charge for admission, relying on donations from visitors & local businesses.
It is not yet clear what is going to happen to the museum & it's priceless collection of exhibits, but it has been said that they are to be returned to SRT, possibly to be included in a new National Railway Museum, rumoured to be established later this year.
Former curator Chulsiri's biggest concern is with the fate of the two medical coaches, made with precious golden teakwood. They were designed & constructed entirely by Thai technicians & engineers, only the chassis' were brought from England. "Not a single metal rivet was used (to put the trains together).



museum interior

We are worried that the SRT might not take good enough care of them, which would be a pity", he said.



the two golden teakwood coaches



Bangkok's first tram - circa 1892

Author's note : the next 2 pages describe the ongoing renovation, to museum exhibition standards, of 5 steam locomotives, currently at SRT's Makkasan workshops. It's believed these locos were donated to the Thai Royal family some years ago & it is hoped that they may become the centrepiece of the rumoured new railway museum & if so, it would seem highly appropriate to name it - **The Royal Railway Museum of Thailand** - just a thought !

Makkasan's rusting locos ……..Fit for a King ?

(refer pages 46 & 47 Lines Aside, for original reports)

This has been a topic for discussion among railway enthusiasts, ever since Wisurat Bholsithi's blog of 24/02/2011 said 7 of the locos were to be restored to go to the Royal Palaces. Nothing then happened & the locos continued to rust away in their new location on the workshop sidings - **until very recently !** Suddenly signs of activity all around 5 of these locos & on visiting the site with Paul Thompson on the 14th December 2012, we found that the following 5 locos were being beautifully restored, to museum exhibition standards, by the skilled & dedicated craftsmen of the Makkasan workshops - Indeed it was a pleasure to watch them working & we were both agreeably surprised at the superb results, especially when compared to the other preserved locos nationwide.





before SRT 54 Henschel 0-6-0T N° 9359 built 1909 after ©(CY) 18/01/2013





before SRT 61 Brush 0-6-0T N° 322 built 1911 after ©(CY) 18/01/2013





before SRT 165 North British N° 19971 built 1912 after

Yes - they are, or at least 5 of them soon will be !





before SRT 278(269) Hanomag 4-6-2 N° 10658 built 1929 after ©(CY) 18/01/2013





before SRT 338 SLM Winterthur 2-8-0 N°2332 built 1913 after ©(CY) 18/01/2013



Brush - cab interior



Hanomag - cab interior in course of painting

note : before photos, also courtesy Chris Yapp ©

What will happen to these 5 locos when the restoration is complete ? Will they go to the Royal palaces or maybe form the centrepiece of a new National Railway Museum ?

Total rebuild of Japanese Pacifics 824 & 850

Following near catastrophic problems with the superheating systems in 2011, resulting in both locos being withdrawn from service & the "Steam Specials" cancelled for the remainder of the year, both locos have been the subject of a total rebuild, including new boilers & fireboxes. They are now in "as new" condition & should be good for another 10-20 years. The rebuilds were completed in November & the locos were test run that month (see photo below) & then behaved faultlessly on the King's birthday special, on the 5th December 2012.



824 & 850 move off Thonburi Depot 3rd November 2012 - photo courtesy Peter Green ©





stripped down frame of 824 - 19/05/2012©(KS) discarded old boilers & fireboxes - Thonburi 15/06/2012©(PG)

The skilled & dedicated engineers at SRT's Thonburi depot have completed a total rebuild of these 2 locos in less than a year. What will happen next to 953 remains to be seen, but the Japanese C56 Moguls - 713 & 715 were both participating in this year's River Kwai Bridge Festival, very much under their own steam. It is to be hoped that SRT will now give some attention to the renovation of SNL 7, which was restored to working condition in 1997 & maybe also SNL 31 which was also to be restored at the same time for the Queen's Project, which was never realised.



850 dismantled cab - 19/05/2012 ©(KS)



850 wheels & motion - 19/05/2012



850 frame & wheels - 15/06/2012 ©(PG)



824 discarded old boiler & firebox - 19/05/2012 ©(KS)



in steam again at last ! King's birthday steam special headed by 824 - 05/12/2012 courtesy Chris Yapp ©

The discovery of long lost 744 - Japanese C56 Kawasaki - missing for 20 years !



Seen here with it's 2 Craven coaches under the canopy of a replica station, alongside the road to Mae Jo, 10 km N of Chiang Mai, in Rob Boer's (railasia) 1992 photo - the loco & coaches mysteriously disappeared, without trace. I had been unsuccessfully searching for it the past few years, & despite illustrated appeals in the local press, no information as to it's whereabouts was forthcoming.
I was wondering when the rain was going to stop at my other home in France, when I received an email from Rob Dickinson (internationalsteam.co.uk) giving me a link to a motorbikers website (RideAsia) as a Dutchman had posted photos of the loco + GPS coordinates, some 20 km SW of Chiang Mai - some 30 km from it's previous location. I couldn't wait to return to the sunshine, sadly missing in France last summer, to see & verify this loco for myself.
Phil Gibbins, owner of the RideAsia website, had accidently stumbled on the loco, whilst riding the mountain jungle trails SW of Chiang Mai in August. "What a hidden beauty, pretty much undiscovered - a gem", he says. No wonder it had remained undiscovered for so long - it's completely hidden from passing view, in a long abandoned resort, access being through a gated private entrance to a farm. I finally visited the loco Christmas week & verified that it was indeed C5653, the 2 Craven coaches, plated 1922, were nearby & in surprisingly good condition. My previous, fruitless searches for this loco, were not in vain, as I'd discovered two steamrollers on my last visit & this time I was to find a hitherto unreported steam road loco, whose photo had been posted on the same bikers website - talk about coincidences ! Moves are afoot to acquire 744 with the aid of the Australian War department in Canberra, to restore it as a memorial to the POWs who died, building the infamous "Death railway".



Phil's KTM trail-bike parked by the loco



SRT 744 Kawasaki 2-6-0 JNR N°5653 built 1936



The 2 Craven coaches built 1922

This trip's "bonus" discovery -
Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies
N° 32013 light steam tractor, built in 1920 - found near Song, some 53 km N of Phrae.



Loco relocations 2012 - listed below are all the known locomotive relocations in 2012 :

SRT's 54, 61, 165,278 & 338 - all to Makkasan workshop & sidings for restoration - formerly elsewhere in depot.

SRT 738 - now at FAPO Film Museum, by NE corner of Rajamangala University, Salaya - formerly at Ekkamai Science Museum & Planetarium, Bangkok.

SRT 744 - missing for 20 years & now at old resort in Lanna Valley Farm, Ban Pong, Chiang Mai - formerly alongside road to Mae Jo, 10km N of Chiang Mai.

SRT 950 - now alongside Thonburi old station, Bangkok - formerly at Thonburi Depot.

MRC 3 - now with SRT 279 & SRJ 2 at old course entrance of Siam Country Club - formerly 2km S at lower entrance.

SNL 32 - now back at it's original site outside Hat Yai Junction station - formerly by park, near Khlong Toei.

SNL 33 - current whereabouts unknown - formerly at the Railway Hall of Fame, Chatuchak Park, Bangkok.

CSC 103 - now at undisclosed location in U.K., having been bought by a private collector, who wishes to remain anonymous - formerly on service with Walhalla Goldfields Railway, Victoria, Australia.

10089 - now in service at Thong Somboon Club & resort, Pak Chong - formerly at the Railway Hall of Fame, Bangkok.

MRC 2 - currently at sports centre by Ekkamai Science Museum, is reportedly due for relocation - **but to where ?**

Steam Special Days 2013 - Normally these are **26 March** (SRT's anniversary), **12 August** (Queen's birthday), **23 October** (Chulalongkorn Day) & **5 December** (King's birthday) - with trains leaving Hua Lamphong station at 8am, for Ayutthaya station & returning around 6.30pm. In 2011 SRT planned to run 6 extra specials - 3 to Chachoengsao 16 April, 17 May & 17 September - & 3 to Nakhon Pathom 23 April, 9 July & 23 October, the other 3 on the usual days, as above, before the locos were abruptly withdrawn from service & the remaining steam specials cancelled. I am currently awaiting confirmation of this year's steam special days from SRT & will circularise everyone soon.

Japanese Pacifics - Identity Questions ?

SRT 824 - carries Nippon Sharyo Kaisha plate Manaf.N° 1529 & Loco N° 108 - built 1949, which would make the loco **SRT 827/8 ?** It has been thought for many years that this loco was N° 1525/6, which was **SRT 824 ?**

SRT 850 - Run for many years without works plate or other form of identification, it was generally thought to be **Nippon Sharyo N° 1547 - built 1950.** It's new Kawasaki plate N° 3194 would identify it as **SRT 835 ?**

The first batch of 10 Pacifics from Nippon Sharyo delivered in 1949, partly as Japanese war reparations & partly in exchange for rice, were either N°s 1522-31 or 1523-32, hence the disparity in running & works numbers.



824©(JW)

Anyone got any ideas ?



850©(JW)

Loco verifications : Many locos have been positively identified this year & where this is at odds with SRT running numbers or previously listed information, the corrected numbers have been highlighted in **red** in this new edition, as have many other significant changes.

The locos at Siam Country Club, Pattaya …… repainted, at last !

As you will see from Peter Green's photos, the Krauss loco 5418 has been moved a couple of kms up the road to join the other two locos (SRT 279 Hanomag & SRJ 2 Kerr Stuart) at the "Old Course" entrance, together with the old twin-engined plane. Newly repainted & the "jungle" has now been cleared around the Hanomag, added paving & even working lamposts - so you can actually photograph all of it now ! **January 2012**



MRC 3 Krauss 0-4-2T No.5418 (Hanomag in background)



SRJ 2 Hudswell Clarke (Wren class) 0-4-0ST No.2387

"New" Standard gauge loco arrives in Thailand !

The Jesada Technik Museum in Nakhon Chasiri recently imported Hanomag 0-4-0T No.6039 & built in 1912, which gives it a unique place, as Thailands only standard gauge (1435mm) steam locomotive**.** Seen here, newly repainted in Chris Yapp's photo (January 2012), in the company of its bigger Hanomag sister - SRT 263 a 4-6-2, built in 1928 & acquired from Bangkok's Ekkamai Science Museum in March 2011. It spent its working life in the potash works of Kali-Chemi AG in Germany, before being handed down to various museums for restoration for many years & was then "rescued" by The Jesada Technik Museum around July 2011.





SRT 183 safe & well in Pattani, as is - SNL 32 in Hat Yai - thanks to Karl Seltenhammer for info/photos



Fit for a King ? Makkasan locos still awaiting their promised refurbishment, & access still denied ! Chris Yapp - Nov 2011



From The Bangkok Post 19 February 2005 :

Engine from Japanese WWII military train to be recovered .....

"Ratchaburi : After six decades of lying under water, a locomotive from a Japanese military-owned train that was bombed by the Allies during World War II will be retrieved from the Mae Klong river in Muang district and put on display as a tourist attraction. During World War II, the locomotive fell into the water when Chulalongkorn bridge was bombed by the Allies. The train was carrying weapons and supplies for Japanese soldiers and was crossing the Mae Klong river on its way to Burma. Lt-Gen Chaiyuth Theppayasuwan, chief of the army's Engineering Department, yesterday took technicians and divers to inspect the locomotive, which they found was still in good condition but surrounded by explosives. Each point where the bombs were found would be marked and navy experts would be invited to survey the area and find ways to remove the locomotive and the explosives from the water. The train would then be put on display. Light and sound performances after its restoration would be held at Loy Krathong every year to show that war did no good to anyone and caused only damage, death and grief."

Really ? ... Remember this is Amazing Thailand, land of Smiles & Flying Pigs ! (loco still on river bed, 8 years on, as far as I know ?)





Out to raise a sunken train ..... from The Nation 14 April 2005 :

"Denizens of Ratchaburi may soon witness a Japanese steam-engine locomotive rise from its watery grave - if, that is, the attempt to retrieve the World War II-era train does not undermine Chulalongkorn Bridge ...

Suchart went on to say that his divers had taken pictures of the submerged train wreck. Subsequent inspection ascertained it was a Japanese model C56, with the locomotive and carriages lying close to each other..."

Makkasan's rusting locos ..... Fit for a King ?

Visiting SRT's Makkasan depot for the first time December 2010, I was very saddened to find these once proud & gleaming old locomotives, so beloved & cherished by their SRT crews, in such a neglected state, rusting away & deteriorating fast on their sidings. The security guard not only denied me access, but said that I wasn't allowed to to take photographs either, as the locos belonged to the King ! Other visiting European railfans, that same month experienced the same "welcome", which I found very surprising, as I'd been made so welcome all over Thailand during the past year, especially by SRT staff. However, not all the guards proved so strict & I was able to take a resonable set of photos, in spite of the high wall & new green plastic fence ! On returning home & sharing my news with other like-minded enthusiasts, I learnt that SRT had apparently donated most of these locos to the Thai Royal family, some years ago - so the guard had not just been trying to discourage, yet another farang, by quoting Royal patronage, after all. The pieces of this puzzle were beginning to drop into place. Further delving into the remaining steam loco survivors for this guide, prompted the following response from one of Thailand's foremost railfans -

Wisurat Bholsithi said on 24 February 2011 : "I got the latest news about those old locos in Makkasan Factory they have been repainted before being surrounded with white chains and the surroundings have been improved with the decoration with good old station signs, the lamps, the semaphores ... you can spot them while riding Airport City Link Line." He includes a list of 7 locos on exhibition & adds : "Too bad, Hunslet No. 7 *has not been on the list yet - hope to be on the list very soon." **Will railfans now be allowed access & photography ?** - Well No - it seems not ! **Wisurat replied :** " After I ask those with a real connection to Makkasan, I have just learnt very hard fact that those steam locos would go to either Sukhothai Palace or some other Royal Palace eventually... right after getting the final inspection by the officers from Royal Household Bureau ... Therefore, it is NOW or NEVER for YOU to take a photo ... using your sneaking skill to do the jobs since heading into Makkasan Factory require the permission from none other than SRT Governor." (* probably means Hudswell Clarke loco SNL 7)

So - railfans everywhere - take note , get to Bangkok soon or the chance may be gone forever ! Luckily, one British enthusiast, visiting Bangkok on transport business, did manage to pull some strings & get into the depot - taking a superb set of pictures, just in time it would seem ! **What a shame it will be if these locos are restored (by Royal Command ?), only to end up behind Palace walls, not accessible to public view !** **Michael Pass.**

page 48 "Lost" Steam Locomotives of Thailand

Running Number	Builder & type	Works Number	Date built	Last known location	Date last seen
SRT 156	NBL 4-6-0	19962	1912	**Aranyaprathet ***	
SRT 167 *	NBL 4-6-0	19973	1912	**Udon Thani ***	
SRT 174	NBL 4-6-0	21761/2 ?	1919	**Den Chai ***	
SRT 195 *	NBL 4-6-0	21813	1919	**Udon Thani ***	
SRT 196	NBL 4-6-0	21812	1919	**Khon Kaen * probably the loco at Pattani**	11/01/2012
SRT 197 *	NBL 4-6-0	21811	1919	**Udon Thani ***	
SRT 228	Baldwin 4-6-2	58674	1925	**bought by Chiang Mai millionaire Mr Lim Oct 1980**	
SRT 235/239?	Baldwin 4-6-2	59441/60405?	1926/28?	**Nong Pladuk ***	
SRT 242	Baldwin 4-6-2	60408	1928	**Pak Chong ***	
SRT 276	Hanomag 4-6-2	10656	1929	**Bangkok - Makkasan depot ***	07/12/2009
SRT 744	Kawasaki 2-6-0	1703	1936	**rediscovered 20km SW of Chiang Mai**	26/12/2012
SRT 804	Kitson 4-6-2	5162	1917	**Bangkok - N. suburbs by restaurant**	1970's
SRJ No.3	Brush 0-6-0ST	290	1903	**Chumpon, Si Racha - old mattress factory - Sri Maharacha Timber Co. locos dumped there & seen by Rob Boer 28.02.1993 - site now empty ! These locos were all there then & identified from photos.**	1993
SRJ No.5	AB 0-6-0ST	816	1898		1993
SRJ No.7	O&K 0-6-0	11789	1929		1993
SRJ No.9	H-C 0-4-2ST	367	1890		(LCGB)1996
SRJ No. 15	Henschel 0-6-0T	29426	1956		1993
SRJ No. 16	Henschel 0-6-0T	29581	1956		1993
SNL 32	Kyosan/K 0-4-0T	6071	1949	**Hat Yai – found by Karl Seltenhammer**	10/12/2012
SRT 163	NBL 4-6-0	19969	1912	**Phnom Penh, Cambodia - RCR depot***	1990
SRT 169	NBL 4-6-0	21138	1915	**Phnom Penh, Cambodia - RCR depot***	02/05/1991
SRT 408	ALCO 2-8-2	71341	1943	**Battambang, Cambodia - RCR depot***	
SRT 411	ALCO 2-8-2	71342	1944	**Battambang, Cambodia - RCR depot***	
MRC 7	Krauss 2-4-0T	6098	1908	**whereabouts unknown**	
?	Baguley 0-4-2T	2030	1925	**whereabouts unknown**	

Notes to the above :

With the exception of the last 2 locos on this list, these locos are believed to be no longer at the locations noted. I have personally visited all the locations marked * but not found any trace, where they might be now or their ultimate fate.

* The 3 NBL locos, variously reported one time at Udon Thani, are probably just one loco, but maybe with identification difficulties, as in so many cases. The one most frequently reported was SRT 197.

MRC 7 : This is the original loco to bear this number (Krauss No.6098) & **NOT** the loco currently outside SRT HQ in Bangkok (Krauss 6021), which was incorrectly renumbered 7, sometime before 1961. The original loco never seems to have been accounted for ?

Baguley No.2030 : The survival & location of this loco's 2 "sisters", carrying some minor parts of this loco, are known - but this one never ever seems to have been accounted for, either ! Perhaps scrapped ?

Abbreviations in this list : AB : Andrew Barclay & Co., H-C : Hudswell Clarke, Kyosan/K : Kyosan Kogyo, O&K : Orrenstein & Koppel, MRC : Maeklong Railway Co., NBL : North British Locomotive Co.Ltd., SNL : Sung Noen Line, SRJ : Sri Maharacha Timber Co.

Where are these locos now ? What happened to them ? Has anyone any record of having seen them in the past ? Do you have any photographs of them ?

Any information relating to these locomotives will be very warmly welcomed !

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