

Java Sugar Mill Blog Part 11
6 August 2017
Situbondo

East to Asembagus

We went 45 minutes east from Situbondo to visit Asembagus mill. Here the field lines to the north are still active and there are still 2 large steam engines inside the mill. Mill Security was twitchier here than any place so far and they were very worried when any of the group disappeared. However, we saw everything we wanted to and then went outside the mill first to the yard and then to the fields.

The mill headquarters in Surabaya proposed closing 3 mills in the Situbondo area but Asembagus was one of 2 that were due to survive. The 'plan' was later revised to a 'wish' after protests from cane farmers. How 2 mills could handle the cane coming to 5 mills is totally unclear and it would definitely increase the 'cane miles'. Most mills have road trucks sitting around for far too long before they unload for the satisfaction of the truck owners and drivers anyway! When they moved from using their own field railways to road trucks to bring in the cane, the mills managed to pass on the cost of their inefficiency to independent truck owners and their hired drivers.



Bagged sugar waiting to be moved from the mill to the warehouse. These are 50kg bags of basic off-white sugar.



The blue item on the left is an electric motor, two of which have replaced steam engines powering the mill train.



Two steam engines survive near the beginning of the mill train and these are larger engines than those at Olean and Wringinanom.



The mill yard still has a classic appearance with shade trees and sidings for full and empty lori.



Inside the shed which appears rarely used by any working loco is No. 10 the last steam engine to work here. It was last chartered in 2015, I believe. The close up below shows that it is far from ready to run again.



No. 10 is missing much of the motion. Why it was taken off, I don't know, but I doubt it was for repair.



A line up of three locos waiting to leave the mill with empties along with the yard shunter on the right. No. 7 is a Keio built in 1983, No. 5 a Brookville built in 1949, No. 4 no details* and No. 2 is a Kyosan Kogyo built in 1965.

*Although similar, it's not identical to KK No. 2 next to it (width of cab, height of buffer beam, overall height, roof and cab window shape) so the other likely possibility is a German Diema or a Schoema.



Built in the USA in 1949, this is Brookville No. 3479 running as No. 5 at Asembagus.



Ross, Nigel and John K at our 'warung kopi' at Big Tree Junction



US Brookville No. 5 passing our coffee house at Big Tree Junction.



US Brookville No. 5 at Big Tree Junction seems to have lost its train.



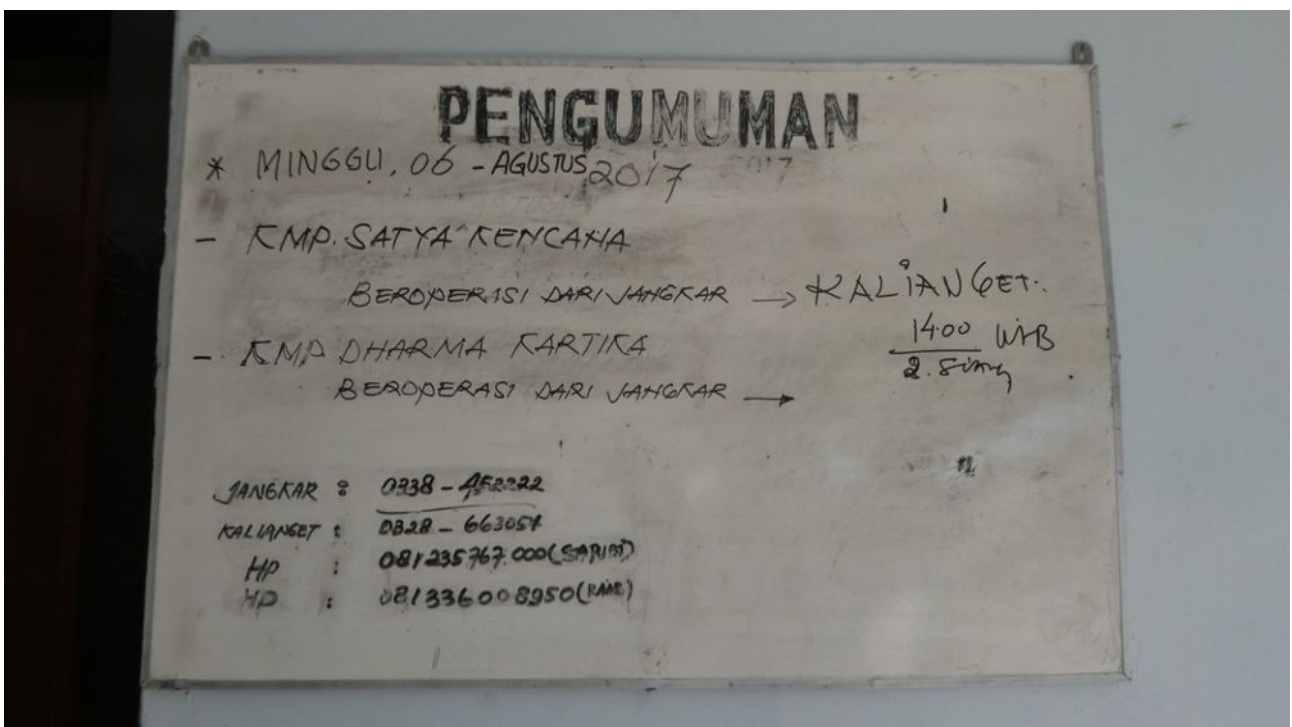
Rickshaws these days have often been mechanised with a small motorcycle minus the front forks welded onto the front passenger area. There must be plenty of motorcycles with front end damage that see new life as the back end of a motorised rickshaw!



The sugar warehouse at Jankar still receives bagged sugar from Asembagus Mill for storage but by road these days not by the bagged sugar boxcar train. Those faint lines either side of the rear wheels of the truck heading out of the bottom of the photo are the rails into the warehouse.



Local fishing boats at Jankar Port.



This was the only sailing list I found at Jankar Port. Two sailings expected today but only one with a time and destination to Kalinget on Raas Island east of Madura. That would probably make a great future travel destination!



Washing the bull at Big Tree Junction.



View from the north line back towards Big Tree Junction.



Cane coming out of the field behind oxen with Mt Baluran 1275m in the background. This mountain is part of the Baluran National Park east of Asembagus.



The Brookville waiting for cane to take back to the mill.



Departing for the mill with the sander on the front.



Built in 1949 and still going strong! I dare say the engine is not the original, though.

That was the only loaded cane train we saw at Asembagus. The next ones were expected around 9 pm.

**John Raby,
Situbondo,
6 August 2017**