

Java Sugar Mill Blog Part 19
17 August 2017

Purwodadi & Soedhono
The last day of the main tour

The tour ends tomorrow with the drive to Surabaya but 4 of the 9 group members are leaving from Madiun so today is the real last day. We went to Purwodadi and arrived before 08:00 to find the administrative staff having an Independence Day ceremony. We retreated to the truck yard but nothing moved until just about 10:00 so 5 of us went inside the mill once we had permission.

It was then busy until a cane wagon overturned being hauled out of the truck yard. This stuffed things up completely so we went back to the hotel for lunch.



Relaxing yesterday at Pagottan - photo by Nigel



Group shot requested by some of the workers in the truck yard at Purwodadi.



Novel way of checking your text messages!



The line of 3 large engines inside the mill



All were made by the Dutch firm of Werkspoor.



One of the steam pumps is British.



Back out in the yard, the action had started.



Closely observed train

Then this happened:





This was going to take a while to clear up so we left them to it.



No work for the locos until the spill has been cleaned up.



The hotel manager wanted us to join their Indonesian Independence Day celebration (for 17 August 1945 when Independence was declared at the time of the Japanese surrender in Indonesia. Actual Independence came in 1948 when the Dutch gave up their attempt to reclaim their colony).

The yellow rice volcano is traditional when celebrating special days and is coloured with ginger and coconut milk. The sign on the wall behind Conrad and Nigel right notes the hotel was originally built by the Dutch (Grand Hotel 1904) and renamed by the Japanese (Yamato 1942) before being renamed the Merdeka (Victory) after Independence. I remember the hotel from the 1980s but all of the low-rise wooden structures with verandas have gone and it's now a somewhat faded late 20th Century hotel (but with beer in the Coffee Shop)!



The rice is surrounded by chicken, tempe, and other tasty items. The rice traditionally has its top sliced off and presented to a guest.



Selamat Hari Kemerdekaan Indonesia 2017!

On our return to Purwodadi, some continued to Soedhono mill. Four of us stayed at Purwodadi to find no action for around 2 hours and it only restarted just before the group arrived back from Soedhono.



No. 10 was on shed having some work done on the tender. The cane transfer operation needs 2 locos and with no diesel (or diesel crew?) available, nothing was moving.



Reminding me of a scene from years ago, perhaps assisted by the overcast sky, No. 16 propels the loads past the control point at the entrance to the mill yard. The signal (which can be rotated) is top right and shows a white disk for proceed. The red square for stop is achieved by turning the signal through 90 degrees.



A lusty saturated steam performance from No. 16 propelling across the bridge and into the yard when things resumed.



No. 10 returns to the truck yard for one more train. The action was over by 16:30 with all the cane moved and no empty lori to load and both locos went on shed. Just 2 hardy souls Chris and Conrad went back for night shots around 19:00 and achieved reasonable results with fireworks from No. 10.



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So ends the main tour blog. There should be more from the Post Tour.