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STEAM IN CHINA 1989



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[F80] Neil and Wendy's Visit to China in 1989

Wendy and I have completed another epic task, scanning and rewriting the diary of our second visit to China, this one in 1989. This trip was organised by Railway Travel and Photography although the proprietor and tour leader was taken poorly on arrival into Beijing after the flights from the UK via Paris and Islamabad. As Wendy and I were the only ones to have been to China previously we were asked by the Chinese guide to liaise between him and the tour group. It wasn't the easiest of tasks as there were some who didn't understand the difficulties of travelling in a country not used to having tourists in the areas, sometimes quite remote, that still used steam locomotives on the trains. It didn't help that I caught, what became a fairly normal occurrence amongst 'off piste' tour groups like ours, the virus possibly caused by the then Chinese rail travellers lack of hygiene.

Anyway what we saw was brilliant, the last year I believe of substantial pacific loco haulage possibly anywhere in the world except India, steam locos being overhauled and built, wooden bodied trams, in fact all things that would become unrecognisable in China a few years later.

The predominating classes we saw were the 2-10-2 QJ and the 2-8-2 JS which 18 months earlier we had seen being built in Datong. Other classes in service were SL and RM Pacifics, 2-8-2 JF generally for shunting, 2-6-2 YJ from the 1960s and 2-8-2 SY, which we saw being built on this trip, both types for industrial use. On the Langxiang Forestry Railway which is a narrow (762 mm) gauge 0-8-0 class C2 locomotives were in use.

My notes say we saw around 1300 steam locos in the two weeks, spending our time split between the cold North East and the baking mid China. We covered 6235 kilometres by rail but had one incredibly scary internal flight aboard a Y7 propeller aircraft which dropped 305 metres unexpectedly on its journey from Beijing to Xian.

Whatever one's interest e.g. modern or steam traction, the sight of a country's railway system being used so intensively long before motorways or even tarmac roads became the norm was a joy for any rail fan. Choosing just a few pictures out of hundreds that we've scanned was a headache but I hope they are of interest.

Neil Berry

[F81] Editor's Note

Many thanks to Neil and Wendy Berry for sharing these pictures with us and for all the hard work they have, obviously, put into preparing and scanning the images to make this Branch Line News International Extra possible.



Sujiatan Railway Museum, Shenyang

Japanese built SL7 757 which we believe has since been restored. 28 March 1989



Hunhe Junction near Shenyang

JS 5138 with SYs 0945 and 1304 inside both ex-works en route to a future on an industrial site. 28 March 1989



Changchun shed
JF1 2410 29 March 1989



Changchun shed
A remarkable sight - Locos visible Left to Right are QJs 7078 & 7085, RM 1118, QJs 6890 & 6883.
29 March 1989



Changchun Tramway
30 March 1989



QJ 0001 in the Jilin half roundhouse shed
It was the prototype built in Dalian in 1956, withdrawn in 1989 and now preserved.
30 March 1989



SL6 679 departing Jilin
in the increasing cold and dark on the late afternoon passenger train for Changchun.
30 March 1989



Harbin Marshalling Yard seen from Sankong Bridge
as QJ 2061 departs on a mixed goods. 31 March 1989



QJ 305 hauls a Passenger Train up the Bank out of Nancha toward Wuyiling banked by QJ 283.
01 April 1989



Super Shine QJ 6955 (we believe) **piloting an unidentified scruffy QJ over the bank from Wuyiling to Nancha.**
01 April 1989



Langxiang Forestry Railway
026 built in Shijiazhuang (copied from European imports) approaching Langxiang.
This is a narrow (762 mm) gauge line and the locomotive is a 0-8-0 class C2.
02 April 1989



Our arrival on a 9-hour overnight train into **Changchun** from Langxiang was greeted with the sight of RM 1058 on a passenger train
03 Apr 1989



QJ 167 (we believe) heading north toward Harbin from **Changchun** on a freight.
03 April 1989



Believed to be brand new SY 1649 approaching completion in **Tangshan Steam Locomotive Factory**
04 April 1989



Newly built SY 1639 at **Tangshan** S**team Locomotive Factory**
04 Apr 1989



Remains of the **Tangshan Locomotive Factory**, demolished by an earthquake in 1976 which closed it for 10 years, reopening in 1986.
04 April 1989



Tangshan Colliery

SY 0964 of 1975 departs the loading area whilst YJ 272 built 1960 creeps forward at the adjacent loader.
04 April 1989



Tangshan Colliery

SY 0031 of 1967 arriving to facilitate a shift change. 04 April 1989



Mostly QJ locos undergoing overhaul at **Lanzhou Railway Works**.
07 April 1989



QJs 2266, 1749, 1746 at **Lanzhou loco' shed**
07 April 1989



An unidentified QJ takes a passenger train away from **Lanzhou towards Zhongwei and Baotou**.
08 April 1989



QJ 2266 at Lanzhou loco' shed.
Sadly we don't look much like this anymore, well Wendy does, just me who doesn't.
I've still got a Bolton Wanderers scarf though. 07 April 1989