

## **Liebherr mobile cranes slide the Wuppertal suspension railway trains into retirement**

- Two LTF 1060-4.1 cranes from Neeb join forces
- 24 trains from of the Wuppertal suspension railway removed
- A new home has been found for all the removed trains

**Ehingen / Donau (Germany), 26 November 2018 – After around 45 years' operation, WSW Mobil, the operating company behind the Wuppertal suspension railway, has replaced the final generation 72 trains. After a maximum of 45 years in operation, the trains were removed and taken to new sites. After a great deal of controversy broke out about the old trains, in addition to being sold, some of them where in fact raffled. Two LTF 1060-4.1 from Neeb were used for assembly work at one of the new sites.**

### **A piece of history on the hook**

A tandem hoist by two mobile cranes marked the end of a whole generation. Whilst the two telescopic truck-mounted cranes from Neeb suspended the final train from the Wuppertal suspension railway at its retirement location, a piece of history finally came to an end. The train, which otherwise had only been hoisted using gantry trains in the suspension railway workshop, was removed from the system for the last time, placed on a low loader and suspended on a specially constructed frame by the two LTF 1060-4.1 cranes. The suspension railway's trains had been in use since 1972, as noted by their name GTW 72, which stands for "GelenkTriebWagen Baujahr 1972" (articulated railway cars built in 1972). Whilst four of the original 28 trains were taken out of service prematurely, the 24 other trains remained in use until 2016. Since then, the trains have been steadily removed and replaced by the new generation GTW 15. Each type GTW 72 train consists of two end cars and a short centre section, and can accommodate 48 passengers in seats with a further 156 standing. The maximum speed of the suspended railway is actually 60 km/h, but this is rarely achieved on the 13.3 kilometre track which has 20 stops. The route of the track includes around 10 kilometres over the River Wupper and 3 kilometres over land. Each year, the railway, which is protected by a preservation order, is used by around 25 million passengers.

## **Loading and removal**

After the announcement that the GTW 72 trains were to be replaced, there was a great deal of controversy about the various trains, which meant that scrapping them was out of the question. Instead, 21 trains were sold and three trains were raffled in the form of a competition. The terms for all buyers were as follows: The buyer was responsible for transporting and installing the trains and had to provide a foundation with the appropriate load capacity. If the train was mounted on the ground rather than suspended, the full drive motor system and the bogies had to be removed, since otherwise the wagon bodies would be unable to withstand the pressure exerted by them.

The two LTF 1060-4.1 cranes hoisted a train on a low loader and placed it on a frame specially built by Wuppertal company Knipex. The main job of the two telescopic cranes, each with a maximum lifting capacity of 60 tonnes, was to position the train in its final resting place undamaged and safe, as both the buyer and fans were anxiously looking forward to seeing it there. The last train to be replaced will be the centre of an event location for Knipex employees and visitors. In this case, it could also be mounted in full since it will be suspended rather than mounted on foundations.

## **New home for the GTW 72 trains**

Many of the trains have remained in Wuppertal – which was also one of the conditions for purchasing a train. The majority of the trains have been placed on foundations and some of them have undergone restoration. One train is currently being converted into a bistro. But some of the other trains have also been given new, unconventional roles – from playground equipment and use as a stand at the edge of a football pitch to an event location.

## **Captions**

liebherr-ltf-1060-4-1-need1.jpg

Bird's eye view – new home for old suspended railway trains.

liebherr-ltf-1060-4-1-need2.jpg

Tandem hoist – two Liebherr LTF 1060-4.1 telescopic truck-mounted cranes install the suspended railway train on a new suspension frame.

liebherr-ltf-1060-4-1-need3.jpg

Event location – the historic trains will be the centre of an event location for Knipex employees and visitors

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