

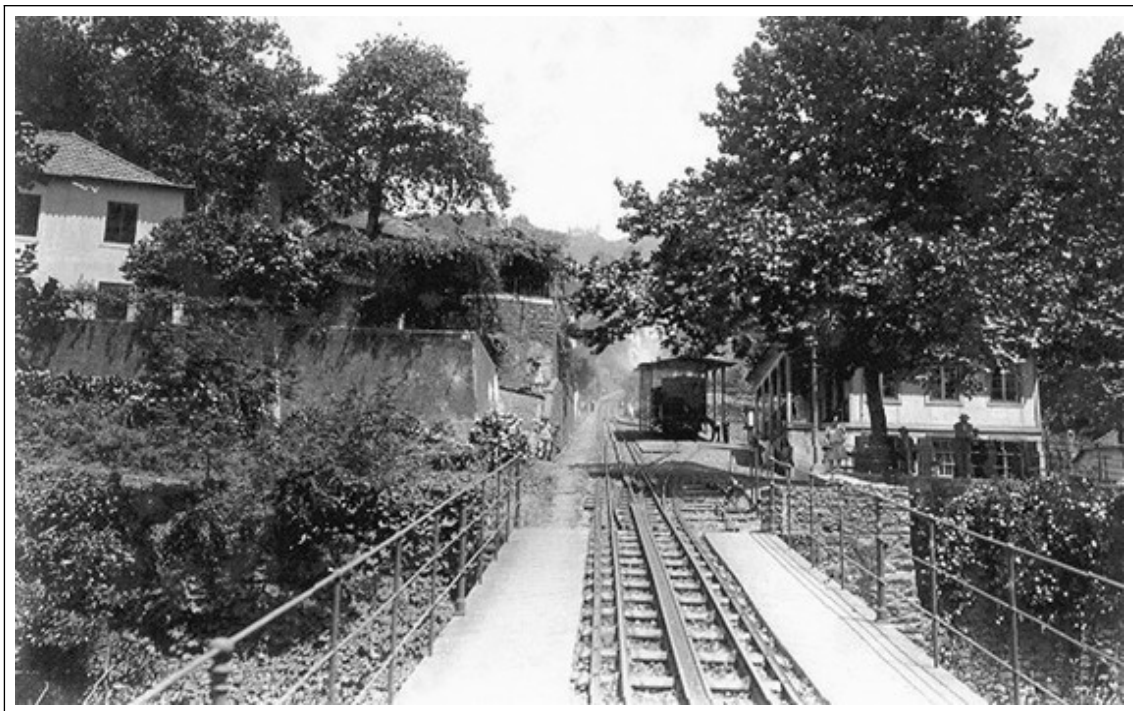
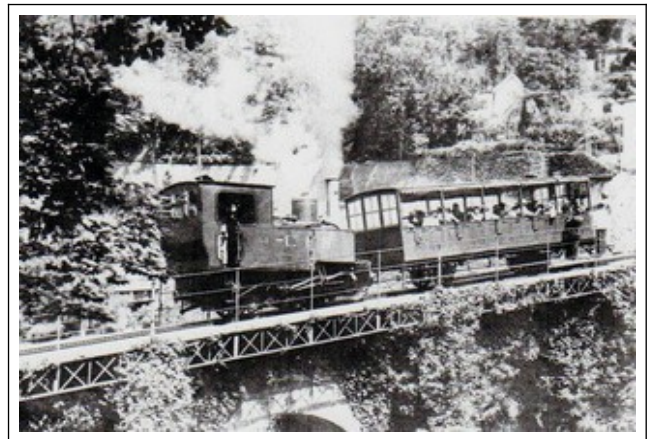
4. Monte, Largo da Fonte station.



In the construction of the railway there would have been many obstacles to overcome requiring embankments cuttings and walls etc. but the biggest must have been the deep valley of the Monte Municipal Park - "Parque Leite Monteiro". Since these early times it is clear to any visitor the Madeirans have become expert in the construction of bridges and tunnels to provide road travel to all parts of the Island.

In both the pictures of the viaduct it looks as if the surface slopes down from right to left. In fact due to the camera angle the opposite is true.

The picture below shows a train at the station as a viewed from the viaduct. This clearly shows the canopy over the train as it waits. Also, the track provides means for another train to pass so I must assume this picture was taken after 1912 when the line was extended to Terreiro da Lute.





This photograph, published in the publication “Transportes na Madeira”, is clearly and incorrectly identified as “Estacao do Pombal” and credited to the Vicents Photographic Museum in Funchal. This is NOT the Pombal station. **It is the station at Largo da Fonte!**

The white building in the centre of the picture with the three windows and part of the stone wall are still there today. Also, the iron/steel

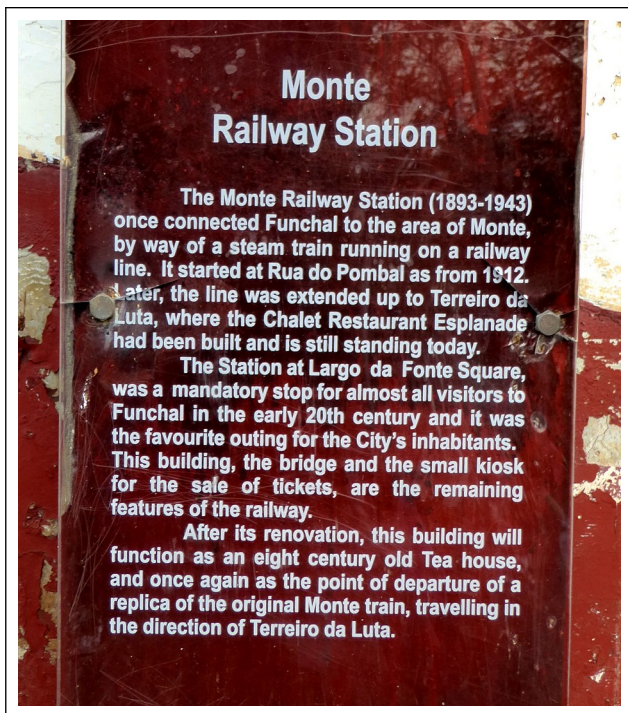
framework built over the track to support a canopy is shown quite clearly on other photographs of the Largo da Fonte station.

The ticket office, with the pointed roof, at the rear.



The station as it looks in 2020. The station has been purchased from the original owners with the intention of transforming it into a tea shop and community centre. In view of the disastrous effect the corona virus must be having on the island economy this project looks unlikely to start soon.

The Parish Council office is the white building building in the top left-hand corner of the picture.



The noticeboard fixed to the side of the station states - "This Building, bridge and the small kiosk are the remaining features of the railway". This is true, but only for Largo da Fonte.

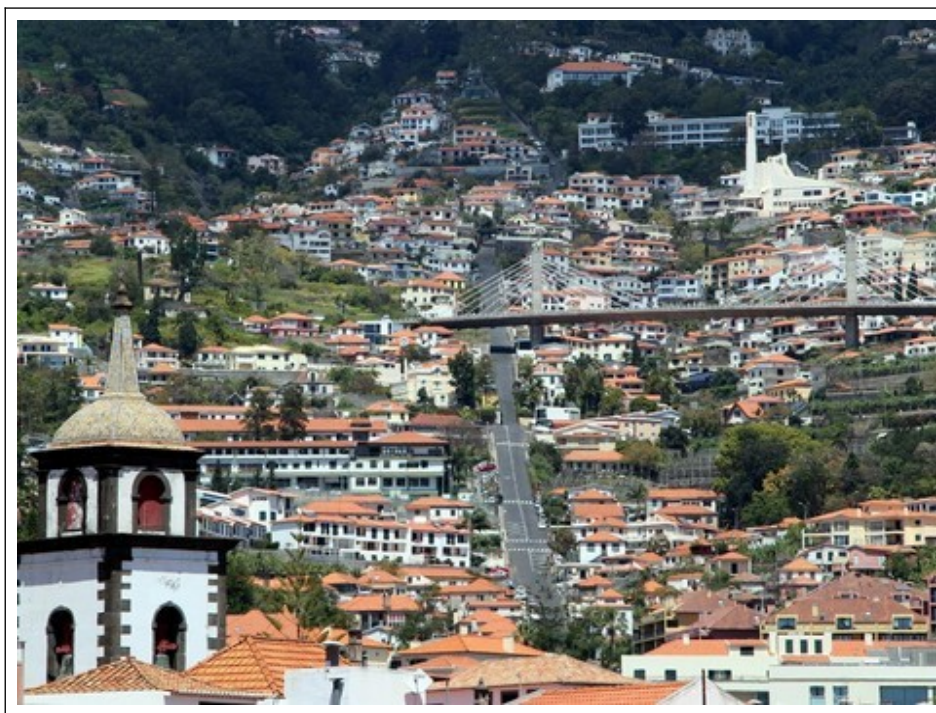
At the north of the parish, at Terreiro da Luta, there are two water cranes that were used to refill the engines boilers. These can be found at the train terminus by the Restaurant Esplanada built for the use of both train crew and visitors.

The Pombal station still exists as does the engine shed next door but nobody has bothered to put a notice board there.

Other less obvious things too are relics of the railway. The entire route from Rua do Pombal all the way up to Terreiro da Luta is still open, and for anyone with the inclination and stamina may be walked without any difficulty.

One other issue with the notice are the very misleading dates in the first line. The railway dates are 1893-1943 but ... this station, and the bridge, were both built in 1912 as part of the extension to Terreiro da Luta. I suspect the error was due to over simplification for a tourist information board and translation errors.

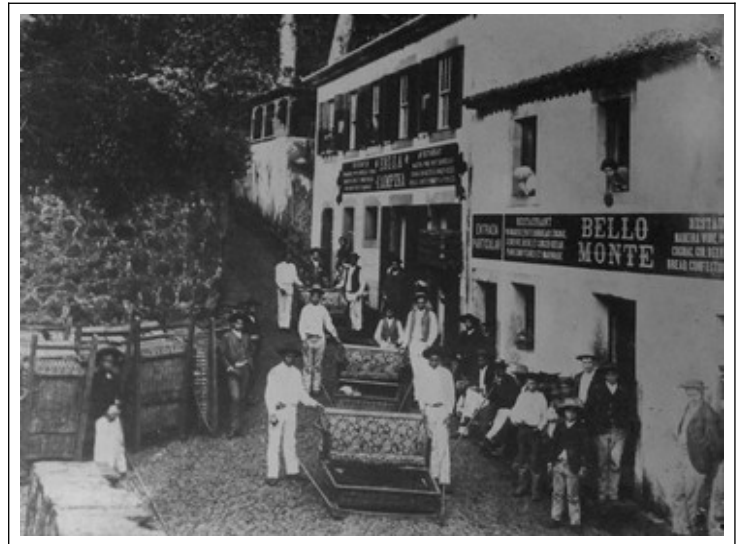
Road names, such as Rua do Comboio (the first straight section in the photograph below), Caminho do Ferro (narrow section curving away to the top), Rua Nova do Comboio, Impasse do Comboio or Travessa do Comboio will always be part of Funchal. In many locations there are tiled panels set into walls depicting scenes of the railway.





This sign, by the north gate of the Hotel Belmonte and at the place from where the basket rides start, points in the direction of a small restaurant that for many years has provided refreshment for the carreiros that work from Monte. It would also be at the place where basket cars would arrive having come down from Terreiro da Lute.

The picture here would have been taken looking down from the slope that leads up to the steps of the Church with everybody carefully aranged and standing very still. The cafe Belomonte is still in the same place and open for buisness in 2020 with good reviews on Tripadvisor, although the name has changed slightly – Bello Monte, Caminho do Monte 184



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