

# FEDECRAIL

## UPDATE No 11

JUNE 2010

**WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE HERITAGE RAILWAYS AROUND EUROPE  
NEWS ♦ VIEWS ♦ ARTICLES ♦ CURRENT EVENTS ♦ OPINIONS**



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### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

It was very gratifying to see so many people at this year's annual Conference; it was our largest attendance ever. We were particularly happy to welcome the Polish national federation on board. All this despite the major disruption caused by the volcanic ash from Iceland.

The Conference itself was addressed by leaders in the Hungarian Railway industry and by Brian Simpson MEP, the Chairman of the European Parliament's Transport and Tourism Committee. UNECTO's Chief Executive, Michel Lasco, gave a presentation on economic benefits to the region created by tourist trains; and Gordon Rushton launched the FEDECRAIL Passport at the AGM with a flourish in that several railways in several countries had signed up to the scheme.

The late arrival of some delegates due to the flight disruption caused by the Icelandic volcano delayed the meetings of the working groups which, therefore, did not complete their agendas. Despite this, some progress was made and has been made since. Following the resignation of Heimo Echensperger from the chair of the Main Line Working Group, Steve Woods, the UK Heritage Railway Association delegate, was voted in as Chairman in his place, and he has been able to take matters forward with Network Rail, Britain's railway infrastructure owner, and it is probable that a meeting with the interested parties will take place soon to explore a solution to the problem.

The Swedish delegation were able to report some good news from Vadstena insofar as the new body that has taken over the narrow gauge railway has been allowed to operate a limited railway service this summer.

However, we remain concerned for the future of rural lines in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria in the light of cutbacks in Government spending resulting from the recession. At least one visit is planned this autumn to obtain information first hand.

More positive were developments in Serbia and Bosnia, which were seen by participants in one of the visit programmes, thanks to the hard work of Zoran and Janisc.

As always, our thanks go to John and Liz Fuller and Peter Ovenstone, who organised the programmes with aplomb as ever.

**David T. Morgan, MBE, TD**  
President



### **THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MAIN LINE WORKING GROUP**

The decision to create a Main Line Working Group was taken in Salzburg two years ago. In its first meeting in Pétange (Luxembourg) last year the necessity was recognized to know more precisely where the members of FEDECRAIL see problems when historical rolling stock is running over public metals. So it was decided to carry out an action via a questionnaire. The result was very positive as to quantity and quality of the responses, 23 answers coming from 12 different countries were registered.

In its second meeting in Budapest, in April 2010, the members of the working group concluded that the major topic for all members is the coexistence of historical locomotives with next-generation signalling, the ETCS/ERTMS. Even if a general deployment of these systems is far away in most countries, some members experience problems already. So the working group decided unanimously to focus its activities on this topic. The main problems are seen as installation and interaction with old locomotive technology and the quoted price that would be prohibitive for most heritage railways making occasional runs on mainlines. As in several countries some preparatory work has already been done, the group will act in favour of an exchange of experience between specialists. Therefore the creation of a FEDECRAIL Expert Group ETCS was decided. On another level it will be necessary to contact the European Regulatory Agency to make it aware of our problems and even to try to have some support from the Union Internationale des Chemins de Fer (UIC).

To optimize its activities it was agreed that the chairmanship of the Main Line Working Group is passed to Steve Wood. Steve is involved with the subject in his professional activities in the UK and may have easier contact with other specialists.

Members of course have more than this major problem in respect of mainline running: the qualification of volunteers for safety critical functions, the standards of maintenance, the cross-border acceptance of rolling stock and so on. On these topics the group will try to have more information as to the practices in the different countries. The aim is to get the ideal picture of European main line running conditions.

It must be stressed that main line running does not concern only long distance runs of prestigious trains, but more often short runs from a private line to the next station of the public network.

**Albert Wolter**  
Secretary, Main Line Working Group



### **FEDECRAIL CONFERENCE, 22-28 APRIL 2010 : BUDAPEST, HUNGARY**

This year we were based for the main Conference in Budapest, Hungary. In all there were representatives from 16 different countries, including Japan and Australia. There was a slightly different order of events this year in order to accommodate a visit to Kosiçe by MÁV Nosztalgia special train on Saturday. So the running order was the Official Welcome and Opening Reception on Thursday evening; first business sessions on Friday; on Saturday the MÁV Nosztalgia visit to Kosiçe Slovakia; Sunday the second business sessions and AGM, followed by a visit to the Budapest Children's Railway; then a Monday-to-Wednesday visits programme. Some delegates then went to add-on visits to either Serbia or Wolsztyn.

## **THURSDAY 22 APRIL**

The working groups met following the Fedecrail Council Meeting on Thursday afternoon (see Albert Wolter's Main Line Working Group report on page 2 of this issue).

Following the meetings of the working groups we were transferred to the Railway Heritage Park. This is the Hungarian equivalent of UK's National Railway Museum, and boasts a most comprehensive collection of locomotives, rolling stock and artefacts. It has something for everyone, from an electric locomotive driving simulator to a 7¼" miniature railway.

The evening reception dinner and opening speeches were hosted in the locomotive roundhouse, which was an evocative setting in itself, but the evening's entertainment was out of this world. The staff of MÁV Nosztalgia performed an excellent song-and-dance routine, which climaxed with steam locomotive 109.109 bursting through the doors into the middle of the diners in a cloud of steam to the tune of "The Locomotion", with staff descending from the footplate to complete their dance routine! (We had wondered why the locomotive had been in steam all day!) I have never seen anything to match it and to say the place erupted with applause would be an understatement, all further aided by a free bar. On a more serious note, in the roundhouse was displayed a typical Hungarian wagon which is to be restored by the forthcoming Fedecrail Youth Camp, also being hosted in Hungary. Our sincere thanks are extended to everyone at the Hungarian Railway Museum and MÁV Nosztalgia who made this astounding evening possible. The talents of the Museum staff were beyond anything we have ever experienced and the sight of the Museum Director descending from the footplate in his sparkling costume and leading the dance routine will be long remembered!!!

## **FRIDAY 23 APRIL**

### **BUSINESS SESSIONS**

After the delights of the previous evening it was down to serious business in the Conference Room of the Danubius Helia Hotel. The sessions are summarised as follows:

A speech of welcome was made by Dr László Mosóczi, Chief Operations Officer, MÁV, who explained the set up of MÁV Nosztalgia and the situation regarding restoration in former Eastern bloc countries. The Hungarian way is to preserve what is in use to ensure the future. There are 130 vehicles preserved, of which 50% are operational. This includes a Wagon Lits coach of 1912. The policy is "use it or lose it", but it has to be viable; however, this has stood the test of time in Hungary.

Next he explained the tasks of MÁV regarding preservation. He noted it was the Museum's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The history of preservation in Hungary and the rôle of MÁV were outlined. Exhibits need to be classified, and the aim is to preserve an example of each class. MÁV have undertaken 150 restorations, and MÁV policy was explained. The railway's heritage had been studied; it is believed Hungary has one of the best policies in the world, and he was proud of the work that MÁV and the Museum have done.

Following this Dr Mosóczi gave an overview of the problems facing MÁV today. The company was established in 1868 and remained until 1990. He explained the splitting up of MAV into separate divisions, and the problems concerning railway infrastructure and its significant disadvantage against road traffic. Although passenger and goods traffic have fallen, a vision for the future was outlined. This includes renovating railways around Budapest, station re-development, new passenger information systems and electronic ticketing systems. EU funding, which is below average, was also explained. It was noted that the freight division is now owned by Austrian railways. MÁV is responsible for the infrastructure, and is to be a holding company; it is a separate company in line with EU policy

It was then the turn of Dr János Berényi, the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hungarian Rail Association (HUNGRAIL) to take the floor. The history of railway preservation in Hungary was explained. Following the political changes, international tourist traffic started in the '70s and '80s. The '80s saw the start of steam excursions and nostalgia trains. Besides many steam locomotives there are

many narrow gauge railways, and Hungary has the largest narrow gauge network in Europe. There are 19 members of HUNGRAIL, which was founded in 2006, and which aims to create a rail-friendly policy, although the Government's policy is not good towards railways, which are generally underfunded. Rail is regarded as expensive; it is charged for through traffic. However, it is hoped that there will be cooperation with buses etc, and there will be modernisation on key lines: in Hungary this is not just a dream.

Brian Simpson, our own MEP, then gave an electrifying speech and first challenged the policies of the railways in Hungary, asking why, along with many other countries, it is taking them so long to comply with EU legislation,. Transport policy is now along the lines of liberalisation, and with a new Transport Minister in place the mood must be more optimistic, and more European lobbying needs to take place.

Brian then moved on to his main topic of the European Parliament's view of industrial heritage. Tourism has been considered by the Lisbon treaty, but needs a more unified approach with more emphasis on Industrial heritage. FEDECRAIL is leading the industrial heritage movement and is influencing a more permanent shift toward industrial heritage, which charts the economic and social decline of countries. He emphasised that we can put a lot into tourism, and this is the challenge for FEDECRAIL. It is Brian's intention as an MEP to take this up a notch as the European Parliament shifts towards industrial heritage. It is of vital importance to areas of economic decline, and is of great importance to local economies. There is a need to be aware of its own value as a selling point in social and economic areas. This message must be communicated with Governments, and FEDECRAIL in particular needs to be pro-active. To this end, in his rôle as Chairman of the Transport committee Brian will be speaking with the Italian Minister.

After lunch Gordon Rushton spoke on the subject of the economic impact of Heritage Railways and the great importance this has on local economies. This was borne out by the recent flooding of the Severn Valley Railway (UK). Publicity is vital as everybody needs money. Sources of money such as the EU need to be identified. The role of tourism in the community needs to be assessed to see what impact this has on the local economy. A tourism survey and studies can be carried out to assess the economic impact. Gordon highlighted the following bullet points for action:

- Learn the lessons of the last 50 years
- Shout about the use of FEDECRAIL
- Establish relations with the local community
- Get in the area plan
- Do an economic study
- Positive relationships with outside organisations
- Detail of spend
- Sources of information
- Find out why people visit you

In conclusion, word of mouth goes a long way. Find out where the money comes from, do studies to look for information. Be bold: think big, think long term.

*(NOTE : This presentation provoked such lively discussion that David Morgan asked Gordon Rushton to prepare briefing notes on the subject. These are distributed as an attachment to this issue.)*

The next speaker, Jean-Michel Gasc, represented UNECTO (F). The situation regarding tourist railways in France was explained and indeed there is no funding from the French government. The value and organisation of tourism was emphasised, there being 3 million admissions for tourists in a year. Although few journeys in France are made by rail, special events on heritage railways such as a 3 day festival at the Baie De Somme, which produced 18,000 visitors, are popular. The distribution of heritage railways in France is shown on a new map produced by UNECTO, and visitor numbers are up. Funding for projects needs to be debated in order to preserve jobs and support Regional areas. Generally there is no funding split for infrastructure between the local authorities. Subsidiaries such as dining train packages and tourist trains need to be encouraged for the French market. The recent problems with the Vivarais railway were noted, especially where there are problems, such as restaurants, outside the railway's control. Coal firing

problems were also highlighted. Despite no Government funding, heritage railways still support the economy. The high levels of skilled people need to be maintained. UNECTO hold a conference every year.

The last subject of the day was the Fedecrail Youth Camp. The review of the Youth Camp 2009, which was hosted by VDMT in Germany, was given by Bruno Rebbelmund. He explained there were 20 participants from all over Europe, including this time female students. Experience had been gained from the Latvian Youth Camp, and there had been a structured timetable, help from local organisations, and a proper project structure. The financing of the Youth Camp was also reviewed. Finally the impressions of the camp and the opinions of the participants were sought. The overwhelming verdict was “yes it was worth it”. Youth Camp 2010 is to be hosted by Hungary, and where in 2011? (POST-CONFERENCE NOTE : The 2011 event will be hosted by Poland)

Zsuzsanna Selmeczi and Péter Kalóczkai, representing our Hungarian hosts, gave an overview of the programme this year. 16 people who attended last year’s event will be going again. So far there are 20 participants plus 4 from Hungary. 60 years of the Budapest Children’s Railway is being celebrated this year and there will be events held throughout the year, of which this is one. The first part of the Youth Camp will be held at the railway. This railway is run by MÁV to educate children in railway matters and operation. The second part of the Camp will be held at the Railway Heritage Park. All forms of public transport will be used. The project will be the restoration of the wagon that was shown in the roundhouse the previous evening. The wagon is typical of those used to transport refugees, and in this case will be used as a rolling classroom.

Following the formal events of the day, evening dinner was held in the Muzeum Kozlekedesi (National Transport Museum), another magnificent setting which, as its name implies, studies all forms of Hungarian transport. It houses a very good tram and trolleybus section. We were transported to and from the museum on Budapest’s latest trolleybuses which, when they reach the end of the electrified section, lower their trolley poles and proceed on battery power. A simple idea, but very effective.

## **SATURDAY 24 APRIL**

### **MÁV NOSZTALGIA TRAIN TO SLOVAKIA**

As noted earlier, a different running order was needed this year to accommodate this special heritage train to Kosiçe in Slovakia. We found ourselves at Budapest Nyugati station at the unearthly hour of 0630, where our MÁV Nosztalgia train, complete with restaurant cars, was waiting. The train was hauled by a vintage NOHAB diesel.

Once we had cleared the Budapest suburbs, breakfast service got underway in the two restaurant cars, in two sittings. In what seemed like no time we crossed the Slovak border without formality, to arrive in the city of Kosiçe.

To the delight of the “track bashers” we were shunted away into the depot, where we visited the Exhibition of International Railway Vehicles. Despite this somewhat austere title the event was incredible, with what seemed like the whole town turned out for the event. The atmosphere was one of carnival and happiness, and a real family event. Steam engines, historical coaches, wagons, electric locomotives; you name it, it was there. This together with bands, food and drink, and, yes, beer. One impression that everybody felt was the complete lack of formality. As observed by President David Morgan in another august journal, there were no barriers, not an orange jacket in sight, no Health and Safety notices, and everybody behaving responsibly and yet having a thoroughly good family time. It proves it can be done.

After a look round the beautiful town it was back to the main station where we rejoined the train. This took the same route back to Budapest, dinner being served on the return.

## **SUNDAY 25 APRIL**

### **BUSINESS SESSIONS**

The last of the business sessions, presented by Paul Véron, UIC Director of Communication and also the Vice Chairman of the International Railway History Association, focused on the role of UIC and the IRHA.

Paul noted that all railways face similar problems, and that there should be more contact between heritage railways and UIC in the future. There are 200 members, spread all over the world, who fall into three categories of membership: Active, Associate and Affiliate. The UIC is dealing with up to 200 projects at the present time. These range from subjects such as regulations, interoperability regulations and ERTMS/GSMR (which is of great concern to our main line members); and inter-continental freight corridors are also being examined. The UIC structure was also explained. UIC publishes technical papers and leaflets, codes of practice and reports. Conferences for railway operations are held on different continents.

Following this, Paul went on to describe the International Railway History Association. This was established in 2002, and membership is open to all. It looks after Heritage artefacts and railway archives. It brings together associations for railway history. A conference, which anybody may attend, is held every year.

Brief reports followed from the three working groups.

#### Environmental Group

Tony Tomkins reported on the results of the questionnaire, which had been circulated. Particular concerns were air quality and noise pollution. It was generally felt that the movement is generally successful at tackling environmental issues but there is room for improvement. Two focus points for the future are lineside vegetation and fires and carbon footprint matters. The work of Reinhard Serchinger in the field of smoke emissions was acknowledged.

#### Main Line Working Group

The results of the mainline questionnaire were presented. The group will be focusing principally on ERTMS matters over the coming months. (See also report by the Group's Secretary Albert Wolter on page 2 of this issue.)

#### Safety and Operating Working Group

Safety incidents and matters from railways should be shared so that lessons can be learnt. The EU driver's licence would be examined to ensure competency and a training programme instigated.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Before the official business of the AGM commenced, President David Morgan read out a message received from Lord Faulkner, who was unable to be at the conference. Lord Faulkner noted that Peter Ovenstone had replaced him on the Railway Heritage Committee. Her Majesty's Government (UK) sent greetings to the Conference, expressed encouragement for the future, and praised the efforts of the movement. Statistics provided to HMG are invaluable.

David Morgan made a presentation to Edit Meszaros and thanked her for all her hard work in organising the Conference and making it a great success. These sentiments were endorsed wholeheartedly by the Conference delegates.

David Morgan then welcomed everyone to the AGM. Apologies were received from Finland and Portugal.

#### **Minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2009 at Maison de la Culture, Pétange (L)**

These were approved.

### **Membership Developments:**

Applications for membership were received from :

a.) Polish Federation of Tourist Railways (PFK)

A video presentation and commentary was given by Hermann Schmidtendorf and Jaroslaw Lipinski, who also invited Fedecrail to hold a future Conference and Youth camp in Poland. Proposed FEBELRAIL, seconded VDMT. Elected to membership.

b.) National Railway Museum Foundation of Portugal (Entrocamento)

This was the Museum Foundation's second application. Proposed UNECTO. Seconded HRA. Elected to membership.

c.) Association of Friends of the Railways and Tramways of Zaragoza, Spain (AZAFT)

A further application had also been received from AZAFT, who own 80 vehicles and are involved in main line operation. Proposed UNECTO. Seconded FEBELRAIL. Elected to membership.

### **Report of the Council for the year 2009:**

This was in the form of a report submitted by the President, which had been circulated in *Update* No 10. A report from WATTRAIN had also been circulated.

### **Financial Accounts for the year 2009:**

Marie-Thérèse Beunckens presented the accounts and reported that some payments and unpaid sums remained outstanding. She reported that the organisation was under-budget and at present in credit. Proposed Bill Parker (MÁV Nostalgia), seconded Roar Stenerson (Norway) that the accounts be adopted.

### **Report of the Auditors:**

Klaus Schulte was unable to attend the Conference, so the report was given by Ian Leigh. The accounts were approved, and the Council were discharged from financial and criminal liability. The Auditors reported that full access had been freely given to statements etc by the Treasurer. Concern was expressed yet again over the late- and non-payment of membership subscriptions. Expenses claims also need to be submitted accurately and in a timely manner.

### **Election of two Auditors:**

Ian Leigh and Klaus Schulte agreed to serve for a further year, and they were elected nem con.

### **Approval of the budget for 2010 and the level of financial subscription:**

The budget for the year was presented and explained. VDMT proposed and HRA seconded that the budget proposals be adopted. Carried nem con.

### **Election of Council Members:**

Jacques Daffis (F) and Marie-Thérèse Beunckens (B) were re-elected for a period of three years.

### **EU Funding Projects**

a.) Culture 2007

John Jones reported that he was disappointed that support had not been received for an administration base for Fedecrail in Budapest. He had hoped to report positive news as the Conference is being held in Budapest but, unfortunately, that was not to be. Further efforts will be made.

b.) Culture 2000 SteamRail.net

David Morgan expressed disappointment that this is still dragging on with Greece. The Spanish member has gone into liquidation. Another audit is to take place, and further representations made to Manos. David Morgan will take this forward.

c.) Any other EU funding developments

There was nothing further to report, but individual railways should proceed with applications on an individual basis.

### **Fedecrail Passport:**

Gordon Rushton reported that 20 organisations had joined the scheme. It is intended as a cultural exchange scheme, and the Passport is not for free fares but exchange of information. The scheme needs to

be expanded to include more organisations. Details of the Passport will be posted on the Fedecrail website. It is proposed to charge €10 for the Passport. Keith Twyman will administer the scheme. Anyone wishing to find out more or to join should contact [ajgrushton@aol.com](mailto:ajgrushton@aol.com).

### **Youth Exchange:**

This has been reported elsewhere (see page 5 of this issue), but it was noted that the 2011 camp may be held in Poland.

### **Any Other Business:**

- a.) Tim Fischer gave a report on the launch of WATTRAIN (the World Association of Tourist Trains and Tramways) in Australia.
- b.) Youth projects in the Ukraine were noted.
- c.) David Morgan had visited a Swedish narrow gauge railway under threat of closure, which had generated much local publicity. Considerable success had ensued.

### **AGM/Conference 2011:**

This will be held in Montreux (CH) at the invitation of Chemin de Fer-Musée Blonay-Chamby.

Dates were confirmed as Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> April-Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2011, plus visits programme.

AGM/Conference 2012 will be held in Sweden.

## **BUDAPEST CHILDREN'S RAILWAY**

Following the official close of business a visit was made to the Budapest Children's Railway. It was a particular wish of many delegates to see this railway, and we were not disappointed. As noted earlier, the railway is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Administered by the state railway MÁV, it runs for a distance of 11.2 km in the beautiful hills above Budapest, and apart from safety-critical jobs such as driving is staffed entirely by children. This is not only a great investment in the future for the railway, but instils discipline and order into young people at an early age.

After travelling on a rack electric railway to reach the Széchenyi-hegy terminus, we travelled the full length of the line with both steam and vintage diesel traction. Stops were made at all the stations to inspect the facilities, including station supervisors' offices, signalling installations etc. On arrival at the Hűvösvölgy terminus we were treated to the spectacle of the children lowering the Hungarian flag and marching ceremonially to the depot. They all looked incredibly smart. Following a visit to the main depot, we were treated to a barbeque held on a diesel fuelling point, another first for many of us!

## **MONDAY 26 APRIL**

Approximately 100 delegates extended our visit to Hungary with a 3-day programme of discovery to a number of Hungarian transport systems and museums, as well as continuing to enjoy excellent hospitality.

On Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April we congregated at Budapest's Nyugati Station prior to a northward journey along the Danube Valley in MÁV Nosztalgia's vintage train of 4-wheeled carriages hauled by 4-4-0 steam locomotive No.240 (built in 1900). Many heads turned as empty stock for our train arrived in brilliant sunshine towards the end of morning rush-hour. Many photographs were taken on mobile phones as local commuters joined enthusiasts in recording the contrast of the old rolling-stock with modern diesel and electric traction. Our journey along the eastern side of the Danube Valley to Kismaros was punctuated by a photo-stop at God station, where most people disembarked and were shepherded to vantage points within the station; a few passengers remained on the train as it made slow and smoky progress to the end of the platform.

On arrival at Kismaros we detrained and descended from the station to a narrow-gauge railway. After welcoming formalities, our journey along the single-track line commenced following the arrival of a diesel-powered service train. The route followed a wooded valley on the remaining section of a narrow-gauge system. We absorbed the Sylvan vista as our train rattled and rolled along behind steam locomotive



No.490-2004, an 8-wheeled tank-engine built in 1951. The journey was punctuated by 3 photo-stops, the first involving the train ambling across a fairly busy road with ungated crossings. The other stops were in and around the town of Szokolya, where we also enjoyed the scene of the train running alongside one of the town's streets; very scenic and full of atmosphere. The line terminated amidst woodland in the village of Királyrét, which is on the edge of a National Park, with lunch served at an inn adjacent to the station. The return journey was punctuated by a visit to the line's workshops whilst our train was side-lined to allow the service train to pass.

At Kismaros we returned to the main-line station for a brief trip on a service-train to the town of Szob, where we boarded another narrow-gauge train for a run on a route recently reopened for tourists. A little diesel locomotive grunted and growled as it pulled the short train through another wooded area before pausing for a photo-stop – a precarious place as the road running alongside was fairly busy. Our journey continued to a station overlooking the town of Márianosztra, where the view was dominated by a former church and monastery which is now Hungary's largest prison. As we passed a large quarry – output now taken by road – we were reminded that this line was once an important link for the national railway system as ballast for the permanent-way was conveyed from quarries along the line. The line once continued beyond its present terminus, which is hard to believe as the area has been landscaped. There is an aspiration to extend the line - one day! On the return trip we paused for thirsty travellers to be refreshed by drinking water from a spring.

After a short walk at Szob we rejoined our steam train, which had been stabled in the freight yard. Return to Budapest took us back along the Danube Valley – with occasional views of the river! A few people were granted a ride on the footplate of the loco – the experience was exhilarating! Passing surprised travellers at wayside stations we made a smoky return to Nyugati Station at the end of a relaxing and enjoyable day. The evening was not formally organised, giving us freedom to enjoy local food, wine and beer at our leisure.

## **TUESDAY 27 APRIL**

The day dawned bright and sunny – we had yet to see any rain and the temperature remained steady in the high teens Centigrade. Today was taken at a more leisurely pace. Coaches collected us from our hotels prior to our visit to railway workshops in the northern suburbs at Istvantelek. Much of the site has been taken over by non-railway businesses, but some buildings have been retained for the repair and restoration of MÁV Nosztalgia's rolling-stock, as well as providing a 'cemetery' for railway vehicles, most of the items being under cover and protected from the worst effects of the weather. Social members of our party relaxed in the sunshine as it shone brightly on the office steps, while the hard core of delegates scuttled around the sidings and buildings photographing and recording a vast array of locomotives, wagons and carriages. Final repairs were being made to a streamlined 4-4-4 tank-engine and a couple of locomotives were being fettled in the boiler-shop. Senior members of the party recalled locomotive works of their youth with the variety of vehicles creating a mythical Utopia.

Returning to our coaches we continued northwards, crossing the Danube on a modern bridge on our way to Szentendre. This town is a tourist centre, with cobbled streets, at the end of a suburban line from the city centre. Following welcoming formalities at the Public Transport Museum we divided into small groups investigating exhibits dating from an 1890s steam-tram to some very modern trams as well as Suburban Railway and Metro cars, buses and trolleybuses; the staff were very helpful and forthcoming with information. Vehicles were labelled with detailed information, the only disappointment being the very limited supply of English-version guide-books.

A short distance away is the new Skansen Open-air museum. Having initially paused in the well-stocked shop, we headed to the hospitality area for lunch – more delicious helpings of goulash! The museum has numerous roads and paths winding through the park, which allow visitors to stroll at leisure, the museum being based on themed groups of buildings from various parts of the country. New collections are planned. A recently opened standard-gauge railway runs for 2 kilometres through the site, with vintage diesel-powered railcars providing the transport. Several platforms and level-crossings add to the rural

vista. There was plenty to see and for many of the group a pleasant rest from the world of railways, a relaxing way to spend the afternoon. Whilst a flock of sheep meandered through the site, their grazing helping to keep vegetation under control, some delegates sat back and enjoyed sitting in the sun with suitable liquid refreshment. Clouds on the horizon were as black as the ace of spades, but we remained in sunshine. Upon return to Budapest we were advised that there had been a torrential downpour.

Our return trip was punctuated by a requirement to alight from the coaches and follow a nondescript footpath which eventually led to a park beside the river. (Organisers' note: Apologies for this last-minute detour due to the closure of a road leading to the Szentendre Town Pier, where we had been due to join the boat.) A small pleasure-boat was moored at a pier; this was our return transport to the city - surely no visit to Budapest can be complete without a cruise on the Danube. Once aboard, we sat back and watched the world pass gently by. Whilst some of us were content to relax with cups of tea or coffee, it is rumoured that there was a roaring trade in alcoholic refreshment!

When we arrived at the Helia Hotel Pier there was a dash to the hotels to freshen up, friends in the Ibis Hotel having much further to go – but we all managed to return at the appointed time. Our cruise continued and concluded on arrival at paddle-steamer 'Kossuth', which has been restored as a static floating restaurant not far from the famous Chain Bridge and opposite the floodlit Castle. We were treated to an excellent gastronomic experience produced by one of Budapest's top chefs. Coaches eventually returned us to hotels where late evening conversation continued, conducted by the usual hard core of late-night revellers.

### **WEDNESDAY 28 APRIL**

This was our final day in Hungary and commenced with an opportunity to visit the Royal Waiting Rooms at Nyugati Station. The rooms displayed opulent surroundings provided for privileged groups of people and their servants. We sat and considered a previous age when these facilities were regularly used, until our reverie was interrupted by today's irrepressible master-of-ceremonies, Jozsef Nagy, asking us to join our train.

MÁV Nostalgie provided a restaurant-car and compartment coach hauled by a powerful diesel-railcar as our transport for today. As on previous days with special trains, our progress was determined by a requirement to be scheduled between service trains, remembering a significant part of our route was on single-track lines. We ambled along at a steady pace on the outward trip, reaching Kecskemét a few minutes late. Coaches met the train to transport us across town to the narrow-gauge railway which had closed in December 2009. We were there as part of a campaign to promote the line and to encourage its reopening, local press and TV recording our visit. After a visit to the depot and photos of their static steam locomotive, our diesel-hauled train rattled, rocked and rolled along as occupants of an armada of cars recorded the train's progress from both the road beside the line and from various vantage points along the mainly rural route. Jozsef organised footplate rides for a few people, and on completion of their trips they received commemorative certificates. Jozsef and his team were also instrumental in promoting local brands of refreshment, this region being an important wine and fruit-growing area.. After a photo-stop, we continued to Bugac on the edge of the Kiskunsági National Park, where we were greeted with the sight and sound of a gentleman dressed in local costume playing bagpipes. In the background 2 horsemen sat astride their steeds awaiting the opportunity to show us some local horsemanship. Whilst we watched and listened to the entertainment, more local refreshment was offered. After a group photograph, we were guided to waiting coaches for the trip to Kiskunfélegyháza. On the way we encountered heavy rain, but this did not dampen our spirits!

Reunited with our train, we completed the final leg of the journey to Szeged, an historic city which lost its main railway bridge across the River Tisza during the last war and which still has not been replaced. Much of the town-centre dates from late-nineteenth century, when it was rebuilt following a serious flood which wiped out a large part of the town. Having glimpsed some of the fine internal refinements of the station buildings, we split into 2 groups before visiting the tram and trolley-bus depots. The tram depot is being rebuilt and extended as part of the expansion of the local tram network. An old tram has been

preserved, as well as a faithful 2009 construction of a “missing” original-design tram, and they were available for us to inspect. A new maintenance works has being built, in addition to retention and modification of some of the old storage sheds, and many of the secondhand, completely refurbished “new” trams are ready for service. The trolley-bus depot has also been refurbished. In addition to maintenance, new trolleybuses are being built, many being formed from frames of old diesel buses. The maintenance guys fettling one of the vehicles went and found their English-speaking colleague, who provided John Crane with a clear explanation about the workings of these vehicles – there’s customer service for you!

Our final visit was to the local MÁV HQ, where there is a large collection of memorabilia. A wealth of historic items is stored here, the idea being based on the wish of old railwaymen not to lose all their history and heritage. The local MÁV Director showed us some of the exhibits and allowed us to see his office. Within the limited time available we were able to wander around and absorb some of what was in store. As happens with these ventures, all too soon it was time to bid farewell to our hosts and return to our train.

An evening meal was provided on the train as we headed north – 2 sittings which allowed plenty of time for relaxing and networking. Although the outward trip was without incident, the power-car eventually failed to respond to the driver’s commands during the return run, and after a 2-hour delay we were hauled back to Budapest behind an electric locomotive sent to retrieve the train. Interest for the dedicated enthusiasts was provided by the relief locomotive being a V63 freight engine! Congratulations to MÁV Nosztalgia for arranging 24 taxis to ferry delegates to their hotels on arrival, the end of a wonderful visit to a beautiful country of which we saw only a small section.

The holiday was time to renew friendships and to welcome friends from ‘Down Under’. Thank you to John Poyntz, who managed to procure copies of museum guidebooks whilst visiting another museum on one of his rambles around the transport network. Congratulations to Peter Annison, who took the opportunity to try digital technology for the first time, with some surprising results. All our visits were punctuated with greetings and salutations, accompanied by distribution of the latest FEDECRAIL ‘thank you’ gift – a commemorative plate. The final FEDECRAIL clock was presented, much to his surprise, to David Morgan for ‘Services to FEDECRAIL’.

Finally, a great vote of thanks from us all must go to John, Liz, Peter and Bob for their administration both before and during Conference. Lastly, none of this trip could have happened without the preparation, guidance and prompting of Edit together with Andras Szendry and Andras Szigeti and their wonderful supporting team from MÁV Nosztalgia – thank you for making our visit so memorable.

**Steve Wood**  
UK FEDECRAIL Representative

**Nigel Hunt**  
Friend of FEDECRAIL



## **SERBIAN ADVENTURE**

### **STEAM IN SERBIA AND BOSNIA ON NARROW AND STANDARD GAUGES**

The sky was a beautiful blue, quiet with the song of birds and buzz of insects as we stood, poised on the lineside, in the middle of superb shimmering, white limestone scenery with the rails clicking in the heat. Our attentions were concentrated on a large girder bridge over a chasm, and behind it a faintly smoking tunnel mouth. A thin piercing whistle was heard as the train started and then under smoke she had driven from the tunnel out came 83-173 at the head of our train. Camera shutters were readier than ready as their owners clicked vigorously to record this perfectly lit scene. This was only one of many runpasts on the fabulous Sargan 8, on a wonderful Serbian and Bosnian tour after the Budapest Conference.

All had started well at Belgrade Main Station. To our surprise a train of four-wheel stock, plus a restaurant car, had appeared, backed in by an electric locomotive. We got underway with stops on the main line to visit interesting things, and a good meal was served to all. We rolled at a sedate pace for a visit to the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Pozega, where we gazed with delight upon one of the last P  chot-Burdon Double-Fairlie locomotives, and what must be the biggest locomotive in the world on the 760mm gauge, 2-6-6-2 Mallet, 92-043 (Henschel 1917).



We got to the comfortable station of Mokra Gora after dark, to be welcomed by a fine dinner followed by comfortable beds in the attached hotel. In the morning, at gentleman's hours, 83-173 (1948 Đuro Đacovic) took us on a 350m climb up the Sargan 8 with numerous runpasts, dashing in and out of the 8 spirals and 22 tunnels up the ruling grade of 1:50. The old line from Sarajevo to Belgrade, built to the Austro-Hungarian 760mm gauge in 1925, chose to make its ascent of the mountain barrier by looping in an '8' formation, rising through numerous tunnels from Mokra Gora to Sargan Vitasi. It was closed and lifted in the 1970s, but a section from Višegrad has been steadily restored to working order, and it was this we were enjoying. There was a mild clash with Gallic colleagues who had joined us and were vocal in their wish for a clear field of view - but since all was arranged for runpasts so well, everyone got the shot they wanted. Lunch and meals in general were provided on a generous scale, and the following day we were treated to a full, international border crossing into Bosnia on our private train. The line right through to Višegrad has yet to be completed (should be by September 2010) and so we stopped at Dubrun Monastery and continued by bus. However, as the section from Mokra Gora to Dobrun sees no regular service yet, we were rusty railing. On passing through the border between Republika Srpska and Bosnia, all was very cordial. One of the policemen asked politely that we not take photographs – of the policemen at least; the train was fine. How things have changed! It was a wonderful two days, with the beer in our little refreshment car flowing smoothly, and lots of on and off the train to take photographs. We passed the regular service trains, hauled by diesels and free of clouds of smoke. They were extremely well patronised, and indeed this little restored railway is achieving success, with 70,000 visitors being attracted to it each year.



Our tour then took us to Tuzla in Bosnia for a couple of days visiting the industrial coal mining railways of both standard and narrow gauges. We arrived at the monolithic Hotel Tuzla, comfortable but a bit of a reminder of ‘People’s Republic’ times, to find a sad and run-down station. However, it contained a quite splendid surprise. Alongside the rather faded Railways of Bosnia and Hercegovina diesel railcar was a large and clean Kriegslok, 33-504, (Ex-USSR, Skoda 1944(?)) with not a steam leak to be seen.



This was at the head of two carriages and presently performed a false start for us. This large locomotive seemed slow and deliberate in comparison with the frisky Class 83 narrow gauge locomotive of the previous day. She refused to emit a pall of smoke and proceeded with great dignity and power. We got aboard and were whisked out to an industrial complex, where we detrained across the tracks to photograph our train being overtaken by the moth-eaten railcar. Many photostops followed as we made our way up a 29km scenic coal line, through open countryside to the terminus of Banovici. There, after photographing two 0-6-0T locomotives out of steam (it was a national holiday) we joined a feeder line train, hauled by a little 1949, Budapest-built, 0-6-0T 55-99, on the 760mm gauge. This poor little engine did not have the delicate mechanisms inside her cylinders in very good shape. She went forward exclaiming a mixture of sharp bangs and wheezes – but, like little workhorses everywhere, she kept on going. We got our runpasts and a nice lunch in a People's Palace, followed by a depot visit.

The subsequent day saw us visiting the home of the steam giants, the last standard gauge locoshed in Europe, where up to 6 locos can be seen in steam, preparing for freight duties, and a trip up to the loading chutes in a train hauled by the 760mm 0-8-2, 83-158 (1948 Đuro Đacovic). This Class 83 was patiently manoeuvred for us to enjoy as many runpasts as we wanted, and to cap it all we went up to the coal loading chutes at the end of the line at Grivice, where diesel-hauled coal trains came and went around our steam locomotive.



It was a happy band indeed who left a second visit to the People's Palace after lunch for the run to Sarajevo. We arrived here in time for a look round the city, tram ride, station, bullet holes, assassination place of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and a good feed in the famous Holiday Inn Hotel. The following morning we had a splendid few hours in the Sarajevo Tramway depot before heading back to the splendours of Belgrade and home. It was a hectic and very good value seven days on exotic trains, and well worth a further visit.

**Gordon Rushton**  
Friend of FEDECRAIL



## FEDECRAIL PASSPORT

Carte de Visite



PASSPORT was presented to each of the Conference delegates. It was explained that this is not a 'free entry' card. Its objective is to encourage people from member railways of FEDECRAIL to visit each other in cross-cultural and technical exchange.

All of those who attend Conference visit a series of railways in the host country. It always entertains, and frequently takes you behind the scenes. So our thinking is to encourage this process further. The trip to Serbia, for example, has brought Mokra Gora in contact with

our interpretation of the economic impact survey and has promoted potential contact with EU. It has given them a clear indication that they can rate themselves a 'success' by any European standard - and this is an important thing to know. It will be good to encourage exchange visits to other member railways and museums - and this is one of the things that Passport is intended to do.



It was pointed out that the French have the right name for the concept of Passport - *Carte de Visite*. The conditions of Passport have been further refined, and will continue to change. They are:

1. If you wish to visit a museum or railway on the Passport list, just get in contact with the nominated person on the list and make arrangements for your visit.
2. You go to visit in the spirit of exchanging ideas and information. The hosts offer the hospitality they believe is appropriate.
3. There aren't rules for this, but our table of railways and museum gives guidance as to what to expect.
4. If you attended the Budapest Conference, you are entitled to use your Passport until the date of the next Conference. Attend that and you'll get a new Passport.
5. If you would like to have a Passport, you may buy one if you qualify to do so. There is a charge of €10 for this during 2010 and you should apply initially to [ajgrushton@aol.com](mailto:ajgrushton@aol.com).
6. Those qualifying to have a Passport are :
  - a. Directors of FEDECRAIL member railways and member museum controlling boards, trusts and umbrella organisations;
  - b. Council Members of FEDECRAIL and member railways' and member museums' controlling boards, trusts and umbrella organisations.
7. For 2010 (and probably 2011) the number of people to whom we are prepared to issue Passports to is being limited to allow the scheme to bed in.
8. For future years we intend that the price will rise - but so will the number of participating organisations.
9. The administrator of passport will initially be Keith Twyman. Obviously, as numbers start to rise, Keith will need help with this.

The list of the "pilot participant host" railways and museums handed out at the Budapest Conference is now changing as more organisations sign up. Thus the best way of dealing with this will be for us to devise a Passport Website. This will allow you to access where you can go, how to get there, what to see and whom to meet much more easily. It will also allow you to communicate with the people you want to see.

If you want your railway to be in the passport scheme, please contact [ajgrushton@aol.com](mailto:ajgrushton@aol.com). Several people did this before and at the Conference, and their museums/railways have now 'joined'.

**Gordon Rushton**



#### **STATEMENT FROM BULGARIA**

Ilija Iliev, a professional tour leader, and Stephan Stoitschkoff, a railway historian, are two Bulgarian railway enthusiasts with a lot of feeling for steam flavour and heritage. They had hoped to attend the 2010 Fedecrail Conference and AGM at Budapest, but since the costs were too high they asked me to read their statement before the AGM. However, time ran out that day, so I have decided to make it a small article about Bulgaria's railway heritage activities.

Mr. Stoitschkoff owns 200,000 historical railway documents, and of these there are 40,000 negatives. He specialises in coaches and he has written articles in *Lok Magazin* and *Eisenbahn Kurier*. At his home I have seen many historic pictures and details, arranged class by class in big handmade books. We had a drink together and snacks, and exchanged some presents. His colleague Mr. Dimitar Dejanov is another Bulgarian railway historian; his speciality is locomotives. He published a book *Die Lokomotiven Bulgariens* (Slezak Verlag). There is a Bulgarian *Railway Transport Magazine*, which publishes also via internet in different languages; [www.jptactis.com](http://www.jptactis.com) is the link.

Right now there is a young association for railway enthusiasts in Bulgaria, but its initial aims were train modelling only. This is going to change soon as far as I have understood; preservation should be worked into the constitution as another, new aim, while they have taken over a small museum. Their first

anniversary was celebrated on 29<sup>th</sup> May and I accepted the invitation to come to the Technical (Transport) University of Sofia, “Todor Kableshkov”. On the premises there are also a preserved steam, and a diesel locomotive.

The association has applied for FEDECRAIL membership and is full of plans for the very near future—they are running under full steam! A year ago the chairman knocked on the door of the University for a room where his friends could join him in a modelling hobby, and to his surprise and gratitude they got the attic with 2,000 square metres including a small railway history museum (uniforms, pictures) at their disposal. The old model railway is now being completely rebuilt in Märklin gauge 1 to become an educational line for school parties et cetera. An incredible amount of work has been done within three months. You may imagine how much wiring alone is needed for such a space. In each room there will be a model station.

Bulgaria has a better-known railway museum in the town of Russe on the Northern, Rumanian border (6 hours by train from Sofia). Part of the vehicle collection is kept in the open air next to the oldest station of Bulgaria, on the line to Varna: but the BDZ national railway is planning ahead its enlarging and putting under shelter, as has been confirmed to me by BDZ staff on 29<sup>th</sup> May.

A tourist attraction in itself is the narrow 760 mm. gauge mountain line from Septemvri to Dobrinishte via Bansko, a popular ski resort. BDZ has put one steam locomotive back into service for this line, and two coaches of 1926 and 1941. Furthermore, BDZ has the passenger steam engine 01.23 in running condition for standard-gauge main line tours through the beautiful countryside. To these can be coupled the *Vitosha Express*, the *Crown Express* or the *Nostalgia-Train*, all with vintage coaches of Royal or Government history. The site [www.bdz.bg](http://www.bdz.bg) gives more information. Right now the restoration of a second class 03 steam engine is under way; it will take one year with five men. In the locomotive works of Sofia it looked like one huge piece of old rust, but that will change soon enough.

After the fall of the Iron Curtain, railway heritage and train spotting experienced their natural boom. Due to the following financial crisis this process has slowed down since the mid nineties, but the present head of the BDZ, Mr. Popov, is dedicated to keeping steam train tours for tourists on the track despite the financial problems the company has to go through. Two female staff members involved are from the Tourism and the Marketing sections.

I met several highly placed officials of the BDZ and the Transport Ministry. They were sincerely interested in cooperation with FEDECRAIL, and in an exchange of information and experiences. An ex-Vice Minister of Transport offered help in contacting the Russian and Chinese railways for getting their rich heritage well kept and restored. He hoped to see us by the end of October.

Mrs. Valtscheva of BDZ’s heritage department attended the reception and asked whether BDZ could become a member of FEDECRAIL, but I told her that until now we have not admitted national railway companies, only separate legal railway heritage and tourism organisations. So it was not a matter for quick promises today - Council would have to discuss this first.

One of my good hosts was Mrs. Gabriela Stoeva, owner of Tandem Travel, which has organized big steam tours in Bulgaria with historic coaches. She was happy to see a fresh wind going through BDZ about heritage train use. Ulpia tours, who also operate steam tours, sent Mrs. Maya Kaneva to the reception.

The reception was opened with a welcome of the chairman, Mr. Vasilev, who then gave the word to me. My words of encouragement about “achieving the impossible” and an explanation of what our FEDECRAIL members are doing were much appreciated, so I talked with many afterwards.

I was presented with a copy of the first magazine of these Bulgarians about railway modelling, in which we found two pictures of the Italian ambassador on the 01.23 – he is member no. 11 of the association and has acquired a BDZ pass permitting footplate rides on any BDZ locomotive. He was the third



speaker, and he told us about his railway modelling hobby and his respect for what the club had done already.

One group, the “Locomotive Forum”, also wanted to join FEDECRAIL. It is just three months young! Its members are BDZ staff and engine drivers who are now arranging transport of an old electric locomotive to Sofia for restoring it into working condition. They too expect to need about one year for full restoration because the engine is in a rather good condition.

I then met Mr. Varjan Apelian of the Railway Transport Friends Association, also with heritage activities for a Children’s Railway at Plovdiv, if I remember well.

As you may understand, during this reception I fell from one surprise into the other... It was a great day, as all recognized, an unforgettable moment and good for networking, to put it mildly.

One pity was that Mr. Ilija Iliev had to earn a living in this season as a tour leader, but we hope to meet him in the Autumn in our Sofia Council Meeting. Much good and hard work had been done by him behind the scenes, so we deeply missed his hologram if not himself.

Next morning a city guide, arranged by Daniela, took me to the ancient churches of 1500 and 1700 years old, until it was time for my home journey. Great hospitality indeed.

Thank you Bulgaria!

**Livius Kooy**  
Secretary



## RAILWAY HERITAGE CONFERENCE

Railway Heritage Conference’s website has recently been upgraded. Presentations are now available on the following link :

<http://www.theworkshops.qm.qld.gov.au/Events+and+Exhibitions/Events/2009/10/Railway+Heritage+Conference>



*We should like to produce an UPDATE every three months so that the news is still current, but we cannot do this unless we have items to include; so if you have anything which you think may be of interest to other FEDECRAIL members – an item of news, an article about Heritage Railways, a letter expressing your views, or anything else that you think is worth recording – please send it to me for inclusion in the next edition.*

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