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EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF MUSEUM & TOURIST RAILWAYS

Fédération Européenne des Chemins de Fer Touristiques et Historiques

Europäische Föderation der Museums- und Touristikbahnen

UPDATE No 17 **DECEMBER 2011**

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



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Since the very successful Dresden Conference, the Council has been busy reviewing its strategy for the near future. In particular, meetings have taken place in Brussels and Toulouse to discuss the options to focus on future lobbying, with a view to ensuring continuity in an environment where many of the responsible officers change on a regular basis, as Governments come and go and policies change.

In this, we are guided by Brian Simpson MEP who, as Chairman of the Transport and Tourism Commission, is ideally placed to point us in the right direction. Indeed, I suspect it was thanks to him that I was invited to speak at the European Tourism Day organised by the European Commission, which was attended by over 400 delegates, including a large number of EC officials. I was supported by Vice President Jacques Daffis, Michel Gasc and John Jones. This itself produced several useful contacts.

Indeed, the Polish Minister who was chairing the sessions when I spoke commented to me that it was she who had made the decision not to close the railway museum in Warsaw following a letter I had written as President of FEDECRAIL at the request of our Polish colleagues.

The other intervention I made was in Sweden after our Council meeting in mid-September, when I visited the Swedish Parliament and met members of the coalition parties forming the Government and one of the principal opposition parties. This visit was to support our Swedish colleagues who had concerns about payment of fees to the Swedish rail regulator and the requirement to register locomotives and rolling stock; but, more importantly, to seek some way of avoiding the high costs of installing the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) in historic and museum locomotives etc. Much to my surprise, we had strong support from all the political parties concerned and even the officials at the ministry, who suggested that they would be supporting the German request to delay the introduction of such a system for at least ten years!

The working group under the chairmanship of Steve Wood, which has succeeded in obtaining some concessions on the technical side, are reported separately. (*See Mainline Working Group report on page 2.*)

Lastly, I was invited to speak on the safety regulation of tourist and heritage railways in Europe at the International Rail Safety Conference held in Melbourne, Australia in October. I discovered that the Australians have some very innovative ideas for the support of heritage railways as the authorities there have come to recognise the huge economic value which we bring to the community.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members a very happy and successful New Year. See you in Sweden in May.

David T. Morgan, MBE, TD
President



NEWS FROM THE MAINLINE WORKING GROUP

Since the last report in *Update* the Mainline Working Group has been able to note some progress in its main topic, the ERTMS.

Our Nordic friends from Sweden have worked out a solution for historical and maintenance vehicles foreseeing a simplified package for supply, installation, programming and testing. This could bring down the costs to a level that may be considered as more realistic. They have received a positive reaction from the regulatory entities, both national and European.

In the European countries the problem is felt by our members in very different ways according to the national approach to ERTMS. In Germany the existing system will probably survive for many years and this system does already fit most historical locomotives. France is in general more reluctant as to generalize ERTMS on its railway infrastructure.

In Switzerland a minimal equipment for the existing Signum train protection system and the ERTMS system has been mandatory since 1 August this year. Some Swiss organizations have initiated a risk assessment to be carried out by an independent consultant to consider the situation of historical vehicles running without this minimum equipment.

In the UK, the news is less positive as the solution conceived for the Cumbrian Line is on hold, but discussions about an alternative solution are going on.

In the Netherlands a discussion has just started about implementing ERTMS on NS locomotives for the future "Hanzelijn". NS has told the Ministry of Infrastructure that it will not be able to use the full speed potential of the line if the Ministry does not pay for these expensive boxes. Now the outcome could be that NS and the Ministry are going to split the costs between them. This means that anything we can do to find cheaper solutions will help a lot, when the total cost picture could also be lowered by the infrastructure owner. Similar discussions could develop elsewhere in Europe.

The Mainline Working Group had an intermediate meeting of its "core team" in Helsingborg during the weekend 10th and 11th September. At the same date the FEDECRAIL Board met there, so the opportunity was given to exchange information between the Mainline Working Group and the Board.

The general feeling is that the activities of the Mainline Group are beginning to show results, especially as the circle of interested members has increased and participants from France and Germany have joined us.

ERTMS will remain an essential topic during the coming years, but mainline runs with historical rolling stock will bring us other items of discussion such as maintenance conditions, qualification of crew, certification of workshops.....

Albert Wolter
Secretary, Mainline Working Group



INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CAMP 2012

Youth Camp 2012 is being organised by the Heritage Railway Association (UK) in conjunction with FEDECRAIL, and will be held in the north of England from Friday 10 August until Sunday 19 August. The Camp is open to young volunteers aged between 16 and 25. The cost will be €115 (£100). Details will be available from national umbrella organisations in January. Please ensure that this information is circulated to all young volunteers.

Liz Fuller

Young Persons and Vulnerable Adults Advisor
Heritage Railway Association



SECRETARY's AUTUMN ACTIVITIES

Between all the e-mails that went into my inbox, there was enough time for actually doing things *without* a computer screen.

In early September my (Dutch) museum railway held its first Thomas the Tank Engine event. It was a great success in all respects. Many families left in late afternoon saying: "We all have had it!" (parents can get tired too). Emotions of the children ran high as they pulled parents into the MBS station, and held them back after the visit.

Mid-September was the weekend for a Council meeting at Helsingborg, Sweden: the location of our next Conference. I think the journey by rail from Copenhagen Kastrup Airport via Helsingör (Denmark) was not only 40% cheaper - including ferry ticket across the Sont - but much more scenic than the interesting longer route over the 30m high Sont Bridge near Malmö. Of course you will read more details about the things we can do and see there, in contributions from the Conference Organisers for *Update*. But the Angelholm Railway Museum was really worth a visit.

I had the pleasure of attending the Autumn Weekend Meeting of Heritage Railways Association in Wales in the last weekend of September. Quite a few regular readers of our *Update* queried at the breakfast buffet table whether I was now going to throw my breakfast eggs out of the window... Thanks to all. Who said nobody reads *Update*! The weekend was good for networking and business, in a very pleasant atmosphere.

We saw the workshops on the lines we visited, with all their historic value. The business meeting itself is for others to comment, but before arriving there in a special train we enjoyed travelling over the newly re-opened section of the Welsh Highland Railway to Beddgelert, through the wild and so very scenic Aberglaslyn Pass. We travelled behind a Mallet and a Fairlie engine, quite a special combination. The line leaves the Ffestiniog Railway at its Porthmadog station, but at present there is limited opportunity for passengers to board the train at that station due to lack of space. The train crosses the road between half-barriers before taking its own route. I think the re-opening of the WHR is a very great and proud achievement which proves that we are often doing the so-called "impossible".

My personal favourites are manifold, the Talylyn Railway being another one because it started as a volunteer operated railway just before my birth. We travelled during its 60th birthday in a very vintage 1860s "Great Little Train of Wales". Of course there was exceptional sunshine on that Sunday, a bonus of the weekend.

Although we must pay tribute to those who helped re-opening these two famous lines, there are other initiatives at an earlier stage such as the Corris Railway with a line length of less than a mile now, but the vegetation clearing of the next few miles was progressing well. We had a very friendly welcome there, too,

and I was happy to see how things had moved since my much earlier visit when there was only a small museum. Please do have a look at the various websites of the Welsh lines.

In September and October we received membership applications from Romania (narrow gauge line Sibiu-Agneta), Denmark (Rent A Lok) and the Ukraine (AZIZU, an initiative to bundle railway heritage initiatives nationwide). I will report to the AGM in due time.

There were also requests to let FEDECRAIL assist by drawing up a Rule Book for new railway initiatives both in Romania and in Greece (where the State Railways OSE may want to re-consider the future of a few lines). In such a case I normally try to find a text or an expert who can guide the new colleagues.

Mid-October saw the Autumn Steam Gala on the MBS. I was the train movements inspector from a cold, tiny wooden shelter at the halfway halt with a hidden supply of hot soup. All trains ran on time thanks to the good cooperation between our staff.

Next weekend I was inspecting tickets on the train. All the children were invited to try and clip their own- if they were four years old and strong enough. There was this very little boy on grandfather's knee. "How old are you? If you're less than four it may be too hard for you." Four little fingers went up to my surprise. "I am four years". It came out with a little bit of pride. He pushed, gathered all his energy and force, and punched a hole. So I praised him. "Are you with your grandparents?" Two fingers went up - two nights. I whispered behind my hand: "And are they spoiling you?" He looked very serious - "Yes, they are spoiling me!" Oh yes, yes, grandpa admitted while bursting out in laughter - that cute little boy was being spoilt indeed! I looked up. About twenty-five people had turned round, they smiled at us happily. I realised why we're doing this as a hobby, and was thankful for the little boy. His spin-off was great.

Livius J. Kooy.



FIRST MEETING OF APHTRO : 8-10 JUNE 2012

A reminder that the Oceania-Asia organisation APHTRO (Asia Pacific Heritage and Tourist Rail Organisation) is planning its first meeting, which is to be held in Indonesia. Everyone with an interest in heritage railways and museums will be warmly welcomed. Booking will be open from January. Details of the Conference may be found on <http://aphtroconference.web.fc2.com/>



We should like to produce an UPDATE every three months so that the news is still current when it reaches you, 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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