

UPDATE No 21

Mai 2013

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



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FEDECRAIL CONFERENCE
THURSDAY 11th – WEDNESDAY 17th APRIL 2013 – ALBI
FRANCE

REPORT BY STEVE WOOD

This year we were based for the main conference in the historic town of Albi located in the Mid Pyrenees region. In all there were representatives from 16 different countries, including Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

Thursday was taken up with a Council meeting in the morning, followed in the afternoon by a meeting of the Heritage Operations Group (the newly combined Main Line Working Group and Safety Working Group).

The first business day on was on Friday. This was followed by the second business sessions and AGM on Saturday, then Sunday to Wednesday the visits programme, to various heritage railways and main line running with heritage traction on the main line. Afterwards some delegates went on an add-on visit to other locations in Spain (Catalunya).

A late afternoon guided visit to Albi Cathedral preceded registration, then the proceedings opened with a reception in the Hotel de Ville (Town Hall) in Albi and bi-lingual address of welcome was made by a Councillor who was in fact English.



The rest of the evening was free to explore the delights of Albi town.

Friday Business Sessions Day

The business sessions were conducted in the lovely surroundings of the Moulins Albigeois delightfully set by the riverside. The sessions are summarised as follows:

David Morgan President of Fedecrail, and Louis Poix President of UNECTO welcomed everybody and said everybody was welcome in Albi, and thanked everybody for their good work.

A representative from the Conseil Général du Tarn added her own welcome and hoped delegates would enjoy the lovely historical town, along with the heritage of the area. She explained her own Grandfather was a railwayman, and how important heritage is in everybody's own countries.

Regulation of Tourist Railways in France Jerome Charles – Officer for Metro and Local Railways gave a presentation on STRMTG (The Technical frame of reference for the French Tourist Railways). This started in relation to ski lifts, but now includes guided transport. It is a free service at present. There are seven offices in France. It has been set up to control safety regulation of guided transport, urban and tourist systems. It advises the local prefectures. It is a technical guide for professionals. There are around fifty networks in France. They are not in charge of SNCF or theme parks. It is a charter to promote safety on tourist railways, and a good relationship has been established between UNECTO and STRMTG. Level crossing safety is of particular concern. Whilst it has not been easy to get accepted it can be revised by Chapter then re-issued. The charter has been finished after ten years. Outside the national network it covers Rolling Stock, Infrastructure, maintenance, track, low speed of tourist railways, Signalling, electric traction on the Northern tramways, operation and maintenance, crowd control, and the external environment. The document is designed to be flexible, and recognised by everyone. It is not a legal document but a basis of control, and method of validation. Following feedback, and inspections, in 2010 after a number of safety incidents a meeting was held in which UNECTO participated and communicated the results to its members. With UNECTO's co-operation the document was re-issued in August 2011 and circulated to members. A good relationship was set up in a climate of trust regarding improvements. Sufficient time was given to smaller operations. A way forward with UNECTO was also established to manage difficult situations and planning for the future. Regulation of railbikes, and assessment of systems was also taken into account. Documents can be found on the STRMTG website, and has been translated into English. If anybody wishes to see the full presentation, please contact the author.

The next presentation concerned the National Report on the Economic Value of Tourist Railways. The report is not quite complete, but is has taken time to compile and update the report. Originally there was no knowledge of UNECTO or tourist railways within the Ministry of Tourism, this has now been addressed, and lots of discussions have taken place. It is important to inform Government, and make local

reporters aware of the movement's activities. There is difficulty between duty and love, people are passionate volunteers, but rolling stock etc needs to be considered. In relation to the economy it is a sensitive topic with ministries. More data and statistical information is required and Fedecrail is assisting with this. Site visits and interviews will take place, not to be critical but initiate positive changes. Following initial thoughts in 2011 the report will provide recommendations and results for the future. Its aim is to bring people from the cities and countryside, with due consideration to the weather and environment. Liaison with various networks will take place and the report will shortly be finalised. It is a European task and it is estimated that the industry contributes approximately 7% of the GNP in France and Germany.

The next speaker referred to the partnership agreement between tourist railways and Tourist Offices. The federation is in charge of cycles on rails and tourist railways. There is a national federation of 23 centres with 2,800 tourism offices. Under a President there is a Council of 38 members, which deals with economics and the rules for tourists provision whilst all tourist activities are dealt with; there are specific tourist packages for heritage railways, with different objectives with fresh resources. Preservation of the environment is essential and heritage railways serve places where there is no access, and are all weather attractions. There is full co-operation with UNECTO

Next Louis Poix and Thomas Joindot from UNECTO gave a joint report. There is a work system of specialists, for main line and private lines. There is a Board of 12 directors. In 2012 there has been an increase of 6% to 3.7 million visitors. There are 85 members with 80 railways and 5 councils. There is no public funding and all income comes from the membership. There is good co-operation between RFF and SNCF, with the aim of preserving the environment. UNECTO hold a yearly conference where feedback is provided from the previous year. Visits are carried out to various networks. It is thought that main line running is 5% activity and 95% problems. In general, main line operations lose money but are under the banner of SNCF. Operations need to be more stringent in the future. A working group UNECTO members has been established and there are two meetings per year. There are training costs and training needs to be centralised. Heritage main line operations are run under the SNCF safety case. EUR 50,000 per year is provided from SNCF for maintenance. Strategy for 2013 – to be more professional, and strengthen technical knowledge. Further investment funding is needed from Governments, but again lack of data was cited.

Train a Vapeur des Cevennes – an analysis of the railway was presented. Originally formed by volunteers who wanted to preserve rolling stock to run on the main line, it was decided to operate a preserved line from Anduze to St Jean Du Gard in the South of France. A professional company was created with 20 employees, 14 KM of track, 3 stations and operates 200 days per year. The railway has a turnover of EUR 1.8 million including shops. The strength of the railway is steam haulage, with many locomotives restored. Green solutions have been incorporated including firing with wood. The railway is a big provider of economic income with people visiting, and eating out, and other activities, including interactive visits with other attractions. It

is envisaged that Internet ticketing will speed up service, and allow more time, and increase the spend in the shops and café. The railway will host the UNECTO conference in 2013. Contacts have been established with STRMTG and national tourism organisations. There are funding problems but it is intended to co-operate with Fedecrail. A policy of continuous improvement has been initiated. Website www.trainavapeur.com

Before lunch a warm welcome was again extended to all delegates from the tourist authority, where again the importance of steam trains was emphasised.

Following lunch our own Brian Simpson MEP, who said he was honoured to receive the title of Consultant for Institutional Affairs of Fedecrail, addressed us regarding building on the European Priority for Industrial Heritage. Brian emphasised the importance of delivering best value in connection with providing data, and what we can deliver to the economy. We do add benefit to the local economy, but there are problems with industry. Regarding Industrial heritage Europe invented the industrial revolution. Locomotives are as much of a part of history as opera and should not be underestimated. What is needed is a reliable organisation, and Fedecrail is seen as a reliable organisation. Co-operation between Fedecrail and the European Rail Agency is essential. There is one certification body, and Fedecrail is the tool for this. The ERA deals with ERTMS, drivers licence etc, and it is essential to work with the ERA to achieve the desired aims. So what's in it for his constituents, well we are all heritage operators. We need to be credible and professional, we are all in the tourism business and we are in competition with beaches, the Alps etc. Success is return visits. It must be remembered that tourists are not a pest. Finally thanks for the volunteers, for developing railway heritage, however youth must be developed through mediums like the Youth camp, the future is youth.

Stefano Benazzo former Ambassador of Italy to Bulgaria, commented on influencing National and European Policy. Stefano is now a Consultant in International affairs of Fedecrail. Fedecrail needs to expand its influence. He expressed great support for Brian Simpson MEP. MEP's devoted to railway heritage must be encouraged. Also the following needs to be noted

1. Contact with the Council of Europe.
2. Contact between Fedecrail and Eastern European federation
3. Continue contact with NEHRT
4. The importance of organisations such as Europa Nostra

The importance of investment of public funds was also noted

SmartWater France gave an overview of their product. This has been very successful in the UK combating metal theft from both main line and heritage railways. The company's HQ is in Paris, with branches in Belgium and Finland as well as the UK. The company was founded in 1996. Metal is individually coded and lasts five years. It also lasts six months on the skin and the product can be seen through clothes. Maps track criminal activity and criminals tend to move away from the area. Thieves are aware of the product. The Gendarmerie in France deal with prosecutions, and a reduction in this type of crime has been seen across Europe.

The last speaker of the day was our old friend Reinhard Serchinger who spoke in connection with politician's perception of steam trains. Problems tend to occur with neighbours in particular with black smoke. A mission statement has been produced. Good politicians such as Brian Simpson need to be encouraged. Most politicians are at best indifferent, and some even hostile. A good argument therefore needs to be made. The Greens in Germany are a big impact; therefore an impact study is required. Air quality needs to be examined and improvement effected. Environmental input must be improved. The advantages of the Stephenson boiler was noted, particularly regarding external emissions. Reinhardt concluded by quoting the example of Roger Waller's engines manufactured by SLM of Switzerland, and his own system. Appropriate statistics were provided.

Following close of business, the evening was spent at the Restaurant Le Bellevue at St. Juery where the main conference dinner was held.

Saturday General Assembly and AGM

AGM

President David Morgan welcomed everyone to the AGM including visitors and membership applicants.

Minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 10th May 2012 at the Folkets Hus, Sodergatan 65, 25002 Helingborg (S)

These were approved.

Membership Applications:

- (a) Fundacio per a la Preservacio del Patrimoni Ferroviari-Industrial (Mora la Nova, E) The railway is situated near Barcelona. The management structure was explained. There is an interpretation centre, and workshop. Patrons are the Council's situated along the line. Views of the line were shown. Various tourist packages such as the mining museum were explained. Funding from the Ministry of Transport and council's has been secured. A training workshop for the unemployed has been established. There are plans for an interpretation centre. Elected nem con.
- (b) Brienz Rothornbahn AG (CH). No members present but a full description was given of this steam run rack railway. Elected nem con.
- (c) Rail Events Inc, Baltimore (USA). This is a commercially run organisation which are agents for the Polar Express. It is hoped that there may be possible sponsorship. Deferred but Affiliate membership accepted.

Report of the Council for the year 2012:

This was in the form of a written report submitted by the President, which had been circulated. Comments regarding lobbying of various organisations was noted and accepted

Financial Accounts:

Marie-Thérèse Beunckens has retired as Treasurer due to family illness. Heimo Echensperger the new Treasurer presented the accounts, and said that there is a small surplus in funds. Generally the accounts are in a good state with nothing unusual. The accounts were accepted.

Report of the Auditors:

Jean-Paul Lescat and Paul Roodbol reported that the audit has been carried out in Brussels on 9th March 2013. All documentation was available. The accounts were satisfactory, and there was no issue with transactions. No discrepancies were found and the conclusion is that the accounting was carried out well, and the figures were accurate.

The audit was approved and the Council were discharged from financial and criminal liability.

The Auditors were thanked for their efforts

Election of two Auditors:

It was proposed that Jean-Paul Lescat and Paul Roodbol are elected for a further twelve months. Carried nem con.

Approval of the budget for 2013 and the level of financial subscription:

The development and history, and the way the budget was apportioned were explained. The budget does not include the conference. A budget of EUR 28,500 excluding the conference was proposed. There are reserves of EUR 58,000. Louis Poix stated that his questions from the previous year had been satisfactorily answered and he accepted the budget proposals. Subscription rates were accepted. Presentation of the budget was discussed. The proposals were carried nem con.

Election of Council Members:

Jacques Daffis (F), was re-elected for a further period of three years, Carried nem con

Following the resignation of Marie-Thérèse Beunckens, the constitution requires a Belgian member of Council therefore Joseph van der Perre has been appointed by Council. He offers himself for election by the AGM. Proposed by Jaap Nieweg (NL) and seconded by Febelrail (B). Carried nem con.

Report of the Working Groups

a) Heritage Operations Group

Steve Wood gave the following report;

Thanks to all members for their help and support, and particularly to Albert Wolter as Secretary

ERTMS still continues to occupy the groups thoughts. Albert Wolter has carried out a survey of the situation in all countries. Anders Johansson gave a presentation which summarised the problems facing the group and Fedecrail.

We were fortunate in being joined by Brian Simpson, who gave immeasurable help, and said we need to take the problems to the ERA. In the light of this Brian is arranging a meeting in the near future with the ERA at Valenciennes (*subsequently arranged for 15th May*) which members of HOG will attend.

Grateful thanks also to Jaap Nieweg of NL for highlighting future problems with the Train Drivers Directive, and local flexibility under the EU directives. This will also be discussed at our meeting with the ERA.

Other topics which concern the group are track access charges which have been a source of concern in the UK. Also a presentation was given by SmartWater which you heard about yesterday.

So a busy year ahead, with again thanks to all members of HOG for their contributions, and of course Brian Simpson.

Next meeting with the ERA in Valenciennes.

b) Environmental Working Group

Alternative fuels are being examined. Steam heating is also being studied as well as items such as coal versus wood for firing steam locomotives.

c) Youth Working Group

Sten Erson-Wester outlined the proposals for the Fedecyouth group. New ideas to attract youth participation will be explored as well as the youth camps. Telephone conferencing will be utilised, and the future organisation was explained.

d) Statistical Working Group

John Jones and Jean-Michel Gasc explained that statistical data is required from the heritage railway sector in Europe for EU and government purposes. Heimo Echensperger said it was intended to carry out a web survey among members to study economics, railway operation etc. It will take account of cultural differences and be multi lingual. There will be 15-20 questions. Approximately EUR 1,500 has been set aside for this. Member organisations of each country will be circulated by their umbrella organisations, in the case of the UK via HRA. The proposed questions will be translated and circulated by email, together with a survey schedule for comment. Following a question and answer session it was decided to progress with this.

Officers

David Morgan paid tribute to Keith Twyman who recently passed away. Keith was Membership Secretary, and the Editor of Update and his contribution was invaluable. Thomas Lange of Sweden has taken over as Membership Secretary and Joseph Sabor of Austria has taken over as editor of Update.

Fedecrail Youth Exchange 2013

This year's Youth Camp will be taking place in Austria Sten Erson-Wester outlined the proposed programme and activities.

EU funding projects and opportunities:

SteamRail.net – The last money has been received, and the matter is now closed.
TRAIN21. John Jones reported on this, and the matter was discussed at length. The project failed because the 89% of points were not attained. The project attracted 61%. A new project will be put forward by Sweden, with a new financial envelope. Transparency in methods and submission is essential, and it should not be confidential. Adequate backup must be provided in the future David Morgan felt that an email sent by Sweden was unacceptable.

Europa Nostra

A meeting will be held next month with the aim of raising the profile of industrial heritage.

WATTRAIN

A CD of the proceedings of the conference held in York last year is now available.

Any Other Business:

Nothing of significance raised.

Next Meeting:

Budapest (H) hosted by MAV Nostalgia.

Edit Meszaros explained there will be special trains and visits will be made to Romania/Ukraine/Slovakia, as well as the usual conference activities

Following the official close of business a visit was made Jacques Daffis' railway Chemin de Fer Touristique du Tarn at Saint-Lieux-Les- Lavour. Following a buffet lunch and civic reception, a visit was made to the depot and workshops. The remainder of the day was spent travelling over this lovely line with the Decauville steam locomotives in glorious weather. The journey takes approximately one hour and there is a very pleasant garden centre at the far end of the line.

Return was made to Albi by coach followed by a free evening

Steve Wood

Fedecrail Conference and Visits 2013

South-west France is an area containing a wealth of history and fine scenery, complemented by an excellent variety of food and drink. The region is also a stronghold of sport, especially rugby. Colleagues in UNECTO welcomed us to the world heritage city of Albi, birthplace of artist Toulouse-Lautrec, which had been selected as main base for our April 2013 Fedecrail Conference. Albi is an excellent city with a compact and historic heart and ingredients for a successful holiday within easy reach of our hotels. With wisteria and magnolia, tulips and daffodils, etc. in full bloom the warm spring weather was a welcome change to the several weeks of cold and wet unseasonal weather at home.

For most delegates this was their first visit to the region. Many of us chose to fly to Toulouse-Blagnac Airport, from whence a shuttle-bus runs to the main Matabiau

railway-station which is adjacent to the city-centre. During our trip many of us managed to investigate France's 4th largest city, a bustling place with St.Sermin's basilica and the old town providing a quieter contrast to the ever busy shops and main roads. Street-markets and the Canal du Midi, which links the Mediterranean Sea via the River Garonne with the Atlantic Ocean, were other attractions. Local diesel trains provide regular services to Albi.

(Contributors' Note: this resume covers post-conference visits; conference analysis is contained in a separate report).

On Sunday morning we travelled by road to Montauban station where we boarded a special heritage train hauled by ex-SNCF 1960's Bo-Bo diesel No.66304 which had been recently repainted. Our 6-coach train, provided courtesy of the Association du Train Vapeur de Toulouse, made steady progress to Cahors, where we had a pathing-stop. Continuing northwards the line initially twists and winds along the Lot valley as well as negotiating numerous tunnels before reaching the Dordogne valley. After a trip lasting nearly 2^{1/2} hours we arrived at Souillac. Leaving the station by road we passed the long viaduct taking the main-line northwards before passing beneath a well maintained, but now disused, viaduct which formerly carried the single-track railway to Martel, alignment originally built as the main route north. Martel is a small, well preserved, medieval town and base for the Chemin de Fer Touristique du Haut-Quercy, the station being a short distance from the town-centre. Our afternoon was spent on and around this line, having a steam-powered push-pull trip to St.Denis and spending time marvelling at the wonderful scenery of the Dordogne valley. We also marvelled at mastery of engineers that built this scenic section of line, part of which is on a ledge cut into the limestone escarpment 130ft (c.40m) above the valley floor. Opened in 1880's the line remained in use, apart from a break during WW1, until 1980. At one time it was economically important for the distribution of truffles, a specialty of this region. Preservation group CFTHQ, formed in 1991, has been running trains since 1997. After a relaxing afternoon we retraced our coach and rail route to Montauban. Coach-trip back to Albi was interrupted by an excellent dinner at the 'Cave Cooperative de Vinotalie' in Rabastens, one of numerous buildings associated with vineyards in towns and villages of the region.

Assembling at Albi station on Monday morning we were greeted by members of the Train du Pays Cathare et du Fenouillèdes (TPCF), invited to load our luggage in the guards-van and board their train formed of a pair of 1960's 2-car 'Caravelle' diesel units (Le Train Rouge – The Red Train), the basis of our transport for the next 2 days. As on Sunday our run was timed between service trains. Pathing-stops enabled us to see what was being done to enhance facilities at a couple of smaller stations as we headed for our initial destination of Toulouse. However sightseeing was secondary this morning. On arrival at Toulouse station we divided into 2 groups, and transferred to a pair of vintage buses, provided by a local transport heritage group, for a trip across the city to visit the TISSEO tram-depot at Beauzelle, adjacent to the Airbus factory at the back of the airport. The city has only one tram-route at present; a connecting line is being built to the airport. Frederick guided us on a tour of the depot, most of our time spent in the maintenance building. This contains both high-level work areas as well as floor-space to lift vehicles on jacks and a separate track with a wheel-lathe. From a fleet of 24 trams 16 are required on a daily basis.

Toulouse has been associated with aviation since early days of manned flight and Airbus continues that tradition. Whilst one group was at the tram-depot the other group was being entertained by Birgit at the visitors' centre for the Airbus A380 aircraft. After an introductory talk we watched a video taken on the first test-flight of the world's largest airliner (24th April 2005); 5 aircraft were eventually used for test-flights in order to speed up granting Certificates of Airworthiness. We were then escorted to the cavernous building where aircraft are assembled – 2 aircraft in production today. Cabin layouts vary, maximum 853 seats, with customers specifying requirements; a fully laden A380 weighs over 550 tons. Over a hundred of the A380's have already been produced and there is a waiting-list; demand is there – before ordering one please remember that each one costs over 300m Euros! All Airbus aircraft are assembled in Toulouse using sections from various production units across Europe. Wings come from UK, fuselage-sections from Germany, tail-sections arrive from Spain and nose-sections are made on site. Specially built Airbus 'Beluga' aircraft are used, along with sea and road transport, as essential parts of the operation. Logistical demands for Airbus production require scheduling of almost split-second timing! Completed aircraft are tested on site and eventually flown to Germany for final fitting and painting before being handed over to airlines. It was interesting to note that cockpit layouts of Airbus aircraft are similar – thereby allowing familiarity of differing models of aircraft for pilots and ease of conversion for their licences. This was a fascinating insight into modern aircraft production. From a viewing platform outside the factory we had sight of completed aircraft, one of the 'Beluga' aircraft and, on the far side of the airfield, one of the withdrawn 'Concorde' aircraft.

Returning to the railway, our afternoon was spent travelling cross-country, via Carcassonne, to Rivesaltes. This small town is near the Mediterranean coast and on the main railway-line through the Catalan area of France to Perpignan and onwards into Spain - a region that has seen its fair share of disputes over the years. After struggling to drag our luggage over the steep footbridge which spans the tracks most of us were accommodated in a hotel a few yards from the station, and opposite a bar which provided ample distraction after a long journey. The evening was spent with convivial company at a nearby restaurant.

With snow-capped Pyrenees Mountains as a backdrop, we boarded our special TPCF 2-car diesel train on Tuesday morning. The branch-line from Rivesaltes lost its passenger services to Carcassonne when the 11km section between Axat to Quillan was closed, and tracks lifted, in 1939. However, regular passenger trains still run between Carcassonne and Quillan. Freight services continued to run from Axat to Rivesaltes until a couple of years ago. In May 2012 TPCF became the first French heritage railway to be granted a national freight operators' licence, which is marketed as RegioRail. The line has weekly services conveying products varying from stone to fine powders; movement of timber is being considered. SNCF still owns the line and receives a transit fee for each train. TPCF runs regular heritage passenger services in the summer months, along with associated road trips from some stations. The single-track line winds gracefully along the valley, passing castles and towns, small farms and vineyards and paraphernalia associated with viticulture, through gorges and over viaducts on a 60 km (c.38miles) route which provides many post-card views. We paused at Caudiès de Fenouillèdes to enjoy the taste of local wines courtesy of 'Cave Cooperative Les Cotes d'Agly', where we were

reminded that various varieties of grape produce particular wines, composition of soil determining which type of grape is grown in a particular location. After an hour's break we continued the scenic journey tunnelling through mountains and curving round hills to reach Axat, a small town snuggling between steeply graded hills of a river valley, location for a well earned lunch and a chance to test our recently acquired knowledge of wines!

So much did we enjoy lunch that we had a delayed late start for the return journey. En route we paused for a photo-stop at Lapradelle before continuing to St Paul de Fenouillet, location for sampling of wine at the 'Grier' warehouse opposite the station. The train-crew had wanted to play an impromptu game of boules at this station, but as we were running later than planned this competition was cancelled! Arrival back at Rivesaltes was only a few minutes behind schedule. The evening was free for us to enjoy the sights and sounds of the town, an opportunity to walk around the old town and realise that, other than the restaurant we used last evening, very few alternatives were available. Fortunately after a fulfilling day many of us only needed light refreshments, pizza or sandwiches, etc, for supper and chose to sit on benches beneath the trees surrounding the town-square. Listening to the chattering of roosting birds and enjoying the warm climate we watched the sun set at the end of a very enjoyable day, tranquillity only broken when the last Ryanair flight of the day flew over the town from nearby Perpignan.

An early start was planned for Wednesday as we had to negotiate Perpignan's road network at rush-hour. Unaware that a by-pass had opened at Easter we had the benefit of an extra half-hour at Villefranche; the small cafe adjacent to the station had some early business! Villefranche de Conflent is not only terminus of the standard gauge branch-line from Perpignan and but is also the starting point for the metre gauge third-rail electric Train Jaune , a line supported by Languedoc-Roussillon region and which runs for 63km (c.40 miles) into the Pyrenees. (Yellow Train – carriages painted in the Catalan colours of yellow and red). The line is full of engineering marvels and challenges, negotiating canyons and viaducts, passing crags and castles, etc, through a kaleidoscope of views within a mountainous landscape. Many a time you did not know where to look – there were so many fantastic views – forwards, backwards, sideways – at times you were not sure if you were on your arm or elbow! The track-bed is cut into the hillside, twisting and turning on the tortuous climb from 427m (1400ft) in the Tet valley to 1593m (5225ft) above sea-level on the Cerdan Plateau. The plateau provides summer pasture for cattle which otherwise winter in farms situated in the valleys. The line has been operating since being built in the 1920's when roads were but tracks and the region almost inaccessible. Trains, which run all year (schedules varying with the seasons), have always been powered by electricity generated by local hydro-electric power-stations. Apart from giving local residents easier access to the coast, the building of the line brought an unexpected economic bonus to the region – development of a busy skiing industry. The line terminates in Latour de Carol where the station is host to 3 gauges – metre gauge for the Train Jaune, standard gauge for SNCF (trains to Toulouse) and Spanish broad-gauge.

For many of us this was the end of the Fedecrail visit. 40 happy souls returned to Toulouse by train and onwards flights home, whilst 40 stalwarts continued into Spain for up to 3 extra add-on days

For providing a wide-ranging and enjoyable programme we extend our thanks to

Louis Poix and Jacques Daffis, and their UNECTO colleagues. Finally congratulations to Liz and John Fuller and Peter Ovenstone for helping to make this trip a relaxing experience. Next year we expect to be reporting from Hungary.
Nigel Hunt

FEDECRAIL CONFERENCE – ADD ON TOUR CATALUNYA
THURSDAY 18TH APRIL –SATURDAY 20TH APRIL 2013

Following the main conference in Albi, an add on tour was arranged to various points of railway interest in Catalunya, based on Montserrat and Barcelona.

Thursday 18th April 2013



After spending a splendid evening in the mountain top resort of Nuria, in the hotel especially opened for our party, we descended on the 0830 rack train to Ribes Enllac.

A bus transported us to Monistrol, and after depositing our luggage at Monistrol Villa we continued by bus to Martorell Enllac.

Spare time here enabled us to eat our lunch in the sun, followed by a look at the small museum in the station.

A very interesting visit was then made to the FGC metre gauge depot and workshops. Standing outside were both preserved steam and vintage electric locomotives. It was interesting to see work being carried out on EMUs, but the star of the show was a renovated Alco diesel locomotive.

The journey was continued by FGC suburban train to Monistrol de Montserrat. We made the short journey to Monistrol Villa station, by rack train, where we were reunited with our luggage. Here there is a fascinating museum dedicated to the former rack steam railway, which houses artefacts, items of rolling stock and models of the former line.

Then it was on by modern rack railway to Montserrat, which offered fantastic views, and sight of the cable car which we travelled on when we held a previous conference in Barcelona.

After check in at the hotels, the opportunity was taken to travel on the funicular to the summit.

The remainder of the evening was free to look round Montserrat.

Friday 19th April 2013

Following a smooth and efficient trip back down the mountain on the rack railway, we joined the FGC train to Barcelona, Plaza de Espanya.

After negotiating the Barcelona Metro (an extensive and very interesting system), we soon found ourselves at Barcelona Sants station where we boarded a RENFE suburban train bound for Vilanova for a visit to the Catalunya part of the National Railway Museum.

We proceeded to Vilanova via Sitges along the scenic line adjacent to the Mediterranean coastline. On arrival at Vilanova we walked to the museum which is adjacent to the station.

Following a video which charted the history of Spanish railways we looked round the small exhibits section. Then we saw the locomotive collection which is housed in the former roundhouse and the collection represents the development of Spanish locomotives through to the diesel era.

However one of the most interesting exhibits was one of the original “Talgo” sets which we were allowed to look round.

We were indeed fortunate, as the museum is not normally open in the afternoons, but they opened especially for us. Let’s hope they get the necessary funding they need.

The day finished by returning to Barcelona by the same route as the outward journey for a free evening in the city.

Saturday 20th April 2013

Saturday morning found us back on the Metro to Av Tibidabo, the terminus of the historic “Blue Tram” We were extremely privileged to be able to visit the depot of this historic line, and inspect all the tram cars. This is normally not accessible to the general public or enthusiasts, and the organisers are to be thanked for making this possible.

Following the depot visit we rode on the tram to the terminus at Place del Funicular, which we had visited on the previous Barcelona conference.

This marked the official end of the tour, but my group went on to sample the funicular up to Tibidabo, followed by more Metro and tram riding.

Special thanks must go to Jacques Daffis and his colleagues for the superb organisation of the tour, helped by Jacques ability not only to speak his native French and English, but also Spanish and Catalanian.

Nigel Wood

CATALUNYA – As Nigel writes above, this year’s study tour had not just one ending, but a series of choices! Having left Nigel’s group at the French border station of Latour de Carol, more than 40 of us made the short journey across the Spanish border to the town of Puigcerda to await the FGC broad gauge train to take us deep

into Catalunya to Ribes. Here we transferred from the broad gauge to the FGC metre gauge rack train for a short journey to Ribes Vila where we were met and shown round the excellent FGC railway museum as well as their depot and workshops. Our final trip of the day was to continue our climb on the rack train to its summit at Vall de Núria in the heart of the Pyrenees at about 2000 metres where we stayed in the excellent monastery sanctuary that has been updated to a very comfortable hotel. We had the chance to walk in the snow before dinner. On Thursday morning a group of about 20 left on the early rack train led by Jacques Daffis to continue for some more days visiting Montserrat, Vilanova and Barcelona. The remaining survivors had a leisurely breakfast before joining the rack train back down the mountain to Ribes to transfer to the broad gauge trains. A few were travelling on down to Barcelona whilst the rest of us retraced our steps towards France. Unfortunately our plans were disrupted due to a fatal accident on the railway near to Ribes and our onward journeys were substantially delayed. However, after a couple of hours delay, we were able to catch a replacement train back to Puigcerda and a bus across the border to Latour de Carol where our connection had already departed. The next train was a bus service for half the journey back to Toulouse. However, this gave us an unexpected bonus as the road tunnel was closed so the bus had to climb high through the snowfields to cross the pass and descend to connect with our onward train to Toulouse, where we arrived 2 ½ hours later than planned.

John Fuller

Once again sincere thanks to conference organisers John/Liz Fuller and Peter Ovenstone, for the excellent organisation of the conference. How do we ever say thank you properly. Finally a special vote of thanks to all of our local hosts in France, particularly to UNECTO and President Louis Poix, and of course Jacques Daffis

Steve Wood



European Rail Agency visited by Fedecrail.

On Wednesday 15th May Fedecrail visited the Headquarters of the European Rail Agency or ERA at Valenciennes (France), with the aim of making good contact, explaining the problems the rail heritage sector had with some new European developments and making a plea for good and workable solutions.

Fedecrail's Heritage Operations Group was represented by its Chairman Steve Wood, Secretary Albert Wolter, Fedecrail Secretary Livius Kooy and members Peter Deuss, Anders Dorge, Andres Wedzinga, Jaap Nieweg and Anders Johansson; these represented five countries.

On the evening before the meeting, discussions were held opposite the station in the Grand Hotel de Valenciennes for our preparation of the ERA visit; consensus was found on all the topics. All participants except Peter Deuss who arrived next morning can be seen on the picture below.



Our hosts were Pio Guido the Head of the ERTMS section, Richard Lockett of the Cross Acceptance Unit and Angelo Chiappini who was the Quality and Conformity Manager for ERTMS. At the end of the meeting we were also able to discuss the Train Drivers Directive with Olaf Mette of the Interoperability Unit.

First of all we made clear what Fedecrail stands for; our Riga Charters and brochures were handed out. We were received with a warm welcome. Several constructive suggestions were made.

Our concerns were also those of ERA and they were much interested in the field seeking contact with them at an early stage because that could only improve the quality of their work- much better than changing anything after decision making.

As Andres Wedzinga said, Fedecrail represented a very large number of licensed train operating companies with activities on the public network or at least a small part thereof. Anders Johansson reported that the Nordic countries had worked on a much cheaper but functional solution for the yellow fleet which also represented a really large number of vehicles qualifying for a good ERTMS system. He asked whether that solution could be discussed with ERA.

Pio Guido noted that finding simplified solutions for smaller series could increase the costs when major suppliers had to provide them. But with the large number of heritage and yellow fleet vehicles together it would be good to know what numbers we were thinking of. Once we have solutions for the harsh environment on steam engines, it should work on the yellow fleet was the opinion of the meeting.

Furthermore it would become interesting if Fedecrail could prepare specifications for its members as we would then have the first *real European* ERTMS rather than different national ERTMS interpretations. These could be used as recommendations

to national governments, thus reducing a lot of work. But it is clear that more work may follow, on which we will report in due time.

By the end of the three-hour meeting we discussed the Drivers Licence Directive. Olaf Mette promised to send a questionnaire to us for the ERA evaluation; replies should have been sent already but he could make an exception for us as we represent a specific sector. Although it would be difficult for us to give all the requested data at short notice he noted that there was a box at the end for comments in which we could leave our notes. This was also much appreciated. The meeting ended with a lunch.

Livius J. Kooy



Our cultural “Riga Charter” as the basis of our restoration work.

To my happy surprise I learnt that my steam railway Museum Buurtspoorweg (MBS) at Haaksbergen had used a change of Constitution articles, amongst others to insert a new article 2-3:



“The Trust shall follow the guidelines as worded in the Charter of Riga, which was adopted in the Annual General Meeting of the European Federation of Museum and Tourist Railways FEDECRAIL on sixteen April two thousand and five.”

Now this is a victory on paper, much appreciated, but is there any effect in daily practice? When I discussed the matter with the MBS Workshop Manager Stefan Fähnrich he assured me that this was indeed the case. One example is that the railway had now abandoned a practice of painting its four-wheel coaches cream and

green. Instead he had done research to find out which were the original colour and lettering practices under their previous owners. Today the trains are green all over and a picture taken on 9th May proves this very clearly. We can see steam engine NS 7853 with re-painted coaches C38, C35 and C36 while C37 and C32 have received the same treatment. C38 is now in the olive green of Kleinbahn Kassel-Naumburg while the C35/37 of the Butzbach-Licher Eisenbahn have received a DB green coat of paint.

Livius J. Kooy.



FEDECRAIL involved in a European Parliament report

Brian Simpson, FEDECRAIL consultant of Institutional Matters and chairman of the Committee on Transport and Tourism of the European Parliament, had commissioned a European Parliament report on the value of industrial heritage tourism in which FEDECRAIL is well represented. FEDECRAIL had been involved in the preparation of the report with President David Morgan and the officers Peter Ovenstone and Jean-Michel Gasc and also Gordon Rushton. The report suggests it had left a very good impression as a real (as opposed to a paper-) European organisation. This had been another example of Fedecrail lobbying activity. The study entitled “Industrial Heritage and Agri/Rural Tourism in Europe - A review of their development, socio-economic systems and future policy issues” provides a description and analysis of how, why, when and where industrial heritage based tourism and rural tourism have developed in Europe. It discusses current issues in those subjects and suggests ways in which both activities could be expanded, made more viable and sustainable, and so deliver greater economic, environmental and socio-cultural benefits for the local communities involved and for Europe as a whole.

Report is available at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/de/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=91297>

„Train 21“ EU Development Project derailed

The European Union brought out a multi-annual development programme called "Culture 2007-2013" which set out to support European co-operation in the area of culture. Through this a common cultural inheritance would be reinforced and the notion of European citizenship would also be fostered. In autumn 2012 Fedecrail submitted „Train 21“ by the due date. It consisted of a multi-annual co-operation project coordinated by Fedecrail itself as the European umbrella body. One particular aspect of the work programme dealt with working with young people in the area of historic railways. The partners came from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Romania, Sweden and Great Britain. Each country had selected its own work programme based on its own requirements. The participants were obliged not just to exchange their own experiences with historic railways among themselves but also to the wider Fedecrail membership and beyond. Project proposals

submitted to the EU Culture 2007-213 Programme were evaluated against several different criteria. In order to receive EU grant a project had to achieve at least 89%. In April 2013 Fedecrail was informed that although the evaluation had awarded Train 21 a score of 61% this was unfortunately not sufficient to be supported.

Ingrid Schütte



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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UPDATE Editor

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