



Type 740 steam locomotive in Primolano/Italy on 19 April 2015.
Photo: Ingrid Schütte

EUROPEAN COOPERATION: USE FEDECRAIL AS ACTIVITY PLATFORM

European cooperation will be the redline running through the programme of our members' meeting in Krems a/d Donau from 20 to 23 April 2023. Activities can be observed on many fronts, which will either affect the museum and tourist rail world very directly or in the long run. To take a few topics by the head:

ERTMS/ECS where various national umbrella organisations (and thus members of FEDECRAIL) are looking for specific solution so that specific requirements can be met at the national level. Thereby, in several countries, governments seem willing to think along, so closer cooperation between them could be very beneficial. The FEDECRAIL platform could be very useful in this respect. FEDECRAIL offers members and their governments the status of representative body in ERA and a knowledge and administrative network at European level, both in Brussels and within our membership.

Fossil Fuels, constraints and future opportunities. Meanwhile, the platform for Working Industrial and Mobile Heritage (WIMH) is beginning to take an increasingly clear shape and the number of organisations uniting in it is increasing monthly. The report on Fossil Fuels as a core cultural value of our heritage is more or less finalised. As a living document, it clearly articulates how, in addition to making the sector more sustainable, conceptual authenticity can still be preserved as a core value. Specifically for this, fossil fuels should still remain available and usable in the long run. The presidents of FIVA and FEDECRAIL have now started a series of talks with the European Commission. Contacts on this with the European Parliament are in preparation.

In Krems, the board will be happy to update the FEDECRAIL members and, in particular,

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how precisely our platform needs the support of the members in order to win the governments of the European Member States for our ideas and also to make the voices in Brussels heard from that angle.

In addition, I am convinced, that by developing FEDECRAIL as a platform for cooperation and activities, various solutions for problem areas will become possible both administratively and financially.

We will be happy to discuss this too with our members in Krems and beyond.

I am looking forward to it and hopefully you too !!!

Jaap Nieweg
President FEDECRAIL

UPDATE No. 55

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*Nr 131 comes on shed at
Connolly 1 April 2023.
Photo: Charles P Friel*



Railway Preservation Society of Ireland
(RPSI):

60th Anniversary of End of Steam on CIÉ Irish Railways

On 31st March 1963, steam traction ended on Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ), Ireland's transport company. One of the locos withdrawn was a Great Northern Railway 4-4-0 No 131, built in 1902. After a period as a stationary boiler, as an exhibit on a plinth, the loco arrived at the RPSI depot and museum at Whitehead and returned to the mainline in 2015. Almost sixty years to the day after the end of CIÉ steam No 131 returned to the Irish Rail network on 1st April, having hauled a seven-coach passenger train from Dundalk, 100 km north of Dublin and the station nearest the border with Northern Ireland.

***Peter Rigney, Chairman
Railway Preservation Society of Ireland***

Fossil Fuels Survey : Industrial Heritage Sector

An important recent development with the "Working Industrial & Mobile Heritage" project. Our WIMH partner ERIH, European Route of Industrial Heritage, are about to launch a survey of their member heritage sites and museums to gain a picture of the ongoing need for coal and other fuels for operating machinery, boilers etc to enable interpreting our industrial heritage to continue. ERIH has more than 300 members in 27 different countries throughout Europe (for more background see: www.erih.net) and a much larger list of sites on its website. It is also envisaged that efforts will be made to obtain data from other industrial heritage locations beyond the core ERIH network.

The WIMH group receives repeated advice about the crucial importance of gathering data about the needs for coal and oil fuels for heritage purposes in presenting our case for support.

A reminder too that we still have many gaps in our own Fedecrail Fuel Survey which we launched last year...! A full update on developments with the

WIMH project will be given at our conference in Krems on Sunday, 23 April.

Peter Ovenstone

**WIMH Working Group - Fedecrail Team +
EN Industrial & Engineering Heritage Committee**

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway (UK)

“Premier” – Back to the Future and an Award

In 1905, Edward Lloyd Ltd, the owners of the paper mill at Sittingbourne in Kent decided to convert from a horse drawn tramway to steam power. They initially bought two ‘Brazil’ type engines from Kerr Stuart of Stoke on Trent. These were named ‘Premier’ and ‘Leader’. Their initial role was to haul wagons from the wharf on Milton Creek up into the large papermills which made newsprint. They were joined by a sister engine in 1908 called ‘Excelsior’. Over the years they were modified to cope with the harsh weather conditions on the North Kent marshes.



During World War one the line was extended to Ridham Dock on the Swale estuary over a one kilometre long viaduct and in 1924 a second paper mill was built at Kemsley about half way along the line. Several other engines joined the fleet many of which are still around to this day. When the then owners of the paper mill, Bowater UK Ltd decided to convert to road transport they didn't want to dispose of their much-loved steam railway and leased it to the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway, who subsequently have purchased the majority of the line and now lease the land of their Kemsley Down station and workshops from DS Smith Ltd.

In 1994 ‘Premier’ who had done sterling work for the railway since handover in 1969 was withdrawn



„Premier“ at Kemsley Down Station. Photos (2): Liz Fuller

for a overhaul with a need for major boiler work. Initially the SKLR had to raise the money to start this work and in 2006 following a grant from the local council, Swale Borough Council, the work commenced. The engine was stripped down to a bare chassis except for the cylinders which were in remarkably good condition. The decision had been made to return 'Premier' to her original appearance from 1905 to the best of our ability with very limited funds. We had one black and white photograph which we could work from but we also had to remember that modern Health & Safety had to be acknowledged.

A new saddle tank was made, and the boiler was sent to external contractor for overhaul, a new cab front had to be manufactured and vacuum braking installed. Several fund-raising appeals were made. The final part of the 'Back to the Future' project was the painting and signwriting of the engine as in the original photograph. These culminated with 'Premier's return to steam in May 2022 with a highly successful 'Three Brazils weekend' when 'Premier' was joined by her two sister engines 'Leader' and 'Melior'. It had been decided that 'Premier' would also be going to the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway for their gala in September 2022 to allow us to test her vacuum

braking and her reliability. She behaved brilliantly and then returned to Sittingbourne where she worked the Santa Specials in December.

We were extremely proud of the work of our volunteers and we nominated her for the Coiley Award for Steam Locomotive Engineering in the Heritage Railway Association Awards. In January 2023 we heard that we had been shortlisted with 3 other railways, the Bluebell, the Dean Forest and the Severn Valley. They were all much bigger organisations than we were and all standard gauge. Six of us made the journey to Birmingham for the Awards Ceremony where we all expected one of the others to win but were very surprised to be announced as the winners to big cheers. What next for our volunteers? Well they have already started the overhaul of Bagnall 'Superb' with all the work including a new inner firebox being undertaken in house.

Liz Fuller
Chairman of the Trustees
Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway



Photo: Leighton Buzzard Railway

Leighton Buzzard Railway (UK):

Bedfordshire

Gin & Whisky Festival

The 2023 Bedfordshire Gin & Whisky Festival will take place at the Leighton Buzzard Railway on Sunday 7th May. Now in its fourth year, the 2023 edition of this popular event will take place over the King's Coronation Bank Holiday weekend from 10.30 am until 4.30 pm in the engine shed at Page's Park, so what better way to toast the new monarch?

Around 60 whiskies, gins, other spirits and pre-mixed cocktails will be available, soft drinks will be on hand for designated drivers, and accompanied children, as well as hot food stand.

Locomotives not being used in service on the day will be available to view, as well as the railway's popular guided Engine Shed Show. An enhanced train service will be in operation from Page's Park Station, departing every 70 minutes between 10.30am and 3.10pm.

Festival organiser Rocky Lancer: "I'm delighted that the Leighton Buzzard Railway have agreed to host the Bedfordshire Whisky Festival again in 2023. With all the profits being donated to the railway, I'm looking forward to many customers

enjoying the day and supporting a good cause at the same time."

Full details can be found at www.buzzrail.uk/special-events/bedfordshire-gin-whisky-festival/

Leighton Buzzard Light Railway:

Track Construction before the Season starts

A surge pond without an outlet is not good news. Especially when it's the wrong side of the track. A determined effort by the Permanent Way team of the Leighton Buzzard Light Railway together with assistance from the contractor worked wonders. Completed in a three day window, the track was back in action ready for two sold out specials on the 24 and 25 March. A fitting start to our season – to add to the sold out Mothering Sunday services held on 12 March.

Visitors from Europe very welcome. See our website www.buzzrail.uk for more details.

***Tony Tomkins – Vice President
Leighton Buzzard Light Railway***



Photo: Tony Tomkins

Seaton Tramway (UK):

Major Winter Maintenance completed for its 2023 Season

Seaton Tramway was closed for its annual winter maintenance from January 3 to mid February 2023, to undergo significant upgrades, repairs, and improvements. The annual closure is necessary to ensure that the tramway remains safe and operational for years to come.

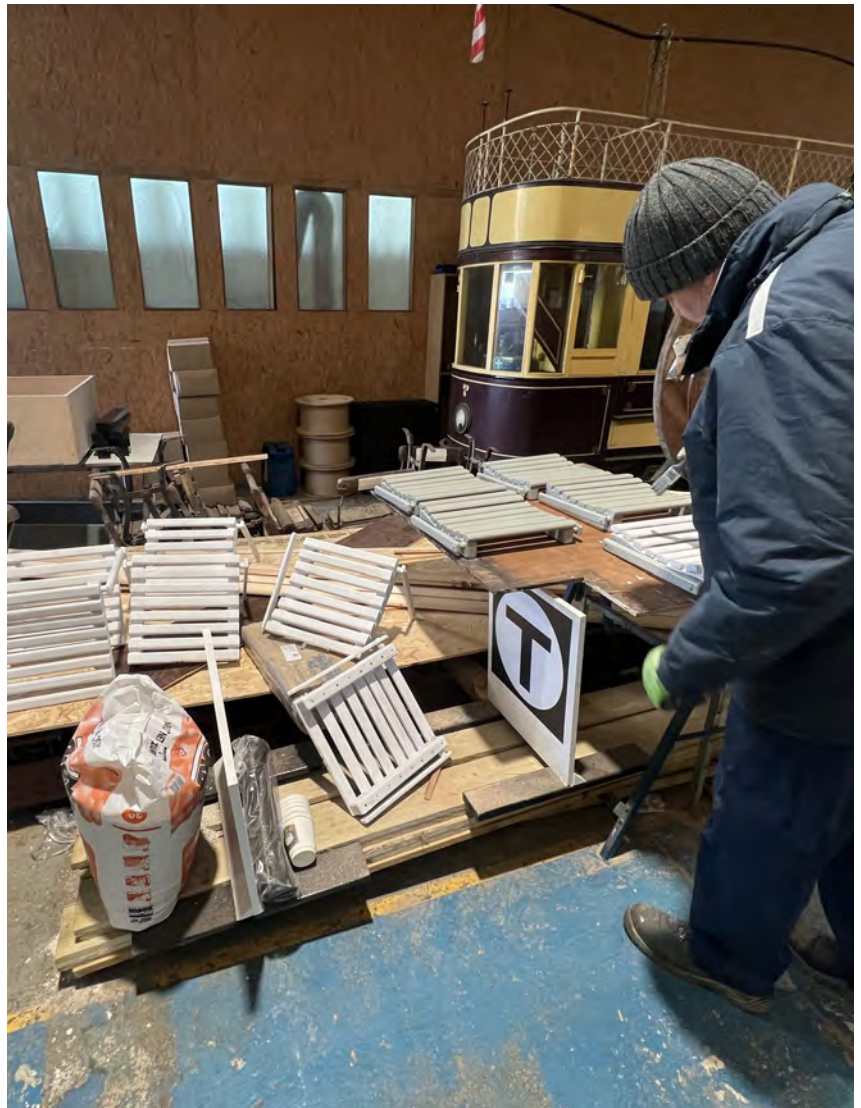
The maintenance work includes track repairs, upgrades to the system, and improvements to the trams themselves. Regular inspections and repairs allow the team to identify potential problems before they become serious, helping to extend the life of the tramway and minimise the need for costly repairs in the future.

During the maintenance period this year, volunteers have been working hard on restoring and painting the seating of Tram car 12, ensuring the comfort of the passengers. Each chair and seat has been carefully removed, sanded, primed and repainted ready to go back into service in 2023.

Tram 10 is currently undergoing a complete service and awaiting new wheel sets before returning to daily service. New finials have also arrived, awaiting installation on new traction poles along the line.

The major project this winter was the work completed on three of the route's bridges, including Bobsworth bridge, Tye Lane North, and East Devon Bridge.

Some of the original railway infrastructure is still used as part of the current tramway, including some of the beams and girders that make up Bobsworth Bridge. The project, undertaken by third-party contractors, took six weeks to complete the major works and will include blasting the



Seats are painted and restored.

Photos (3): Seaton Tramway

current beams, installing new bridge girders, and applying a new coating to the entire bridge. The £200'000 project took eight weeks overall, with the major works being completed early to allow tram service to continue for their February half-term service and weekends in March.

The refurbishment of Bobsworth Bridge has now been completed, ensuring the trams can continue operating beside the River Axe for years to come.

Track realignment took place north of Colyford, between Tye Lane North and East Devon Bridge, to ensure the safety and longevity of the tramway. The work also includes some general maintenance on two bridges north of Colyford, including new fencing, paint, and strengthening.

With the new realignment, the track no longer runs directly into the previous Tye Lane loop layout. So, work began on reconnecting the loop back to the track. This gives a slightly new look



New bridge work and layout into Tye Lane

to Tye Lane loop.

The team at Seaton Tramway is committed to providing a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable experience for all its passengers, and this maintenance work is crucial to keeping that standard. The tramway is now open daily from March 25th to October 29th. For tickets and more information visit tram.co.uk if you would like to sign up to the Seaton Tramway Newsletter to keep up to date with behind the scenes at Seaton Tramway [Visit Here](#).

Josh Castree / Seaton Tramway



Tram 12 with seating ready to be restored

National Railway Museum at Entroncamento (Portugal):

Drawing Competition “My Train Journey”

The National Railway Museum is the promoter of the third edition of the National Drawing Contest on Railway Transport, this year under the theme “My Train Journey”.

Intended for students at the third grade of all schools in Portugal, aims to publicize and promote rail transport, sensitizing the younger public to the railway evolution in history, as well as to the importance of increasing the use of rail transport for people and goods, stimulating creativity and rewarding those who present the best artistic quality.

Since 2021, this competition has been running around the country, bringing together younger people and railway heritage. All participants re-

ceive a family ticket to visit the National Railway Museum free, and there are three prizes for the best-scoring works, as well as several honorable mentions.

This competition culminates in an event that brings together schools, parents, guardians and students, in which the winners of the competition are announced, and an exhibition is inaugurated with the 45 best-scoring designs.

Over the course of previous editions, more than 1000 drawings were received, demonstrating the schools' interest in participating and bringing students closer to arts and culture, seeking to make them more critical of the world around them.

Dilma Miguel
Museu Nacional Ferroviário

Winning photos from previous years:
Museu Nacional Ferroviário





Translator Susanne Stöver deceased

At the end of February, we received the sad news that Susanne Stöver passed away as a result of her cancer. Susanne joined our team of translators at our conference in Volos, 2006, and has been an integral part of it ever since. Even the birth of her two daughters did not stop her from supporting us at our conferences. She simply brought them with her when no other care could be found, which led to a competition, especially in Padua, to see who could look after little Lilo while mum translated.

Even though Susanne was not an active member of a museum railway, she still had a great enthusiasm for railways. Therefore, it was easy for her to learn the technical terms and thus give the translations at our conferences a special quality. Due to her friendly nature and her linguistic skills, she made many friends among our conference participants.

Shortly after our 2019 conference in Wernigerode, Susanne was diagnosed with breast cancer, which she succumbed to on 21 February this year in Innsbruck. Before that, she was able to celebrate her fiftieth birthday in a large circle in Munich on 21 January. Susanne is survived by her two daughters Dora (14) and Lilo (8) and her partner Eric. She was buried in her mother's grave at the St. Nikolaus cemetery on 6 March.

All our sympathy goes to their relatives. We will miss her very much.

UPDATE Nr. 56 will be published in the end of June 2023

Deadline for textes and photos is June 8th

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