



FEDECRAIL

European Federation of Museum & Tourist Railways

UPDATE No.61

April 2024



President Jaap Nieweg (left) and Vice-President Pierluigi Scoizzato unfolded the FEDECRAIL flag on the Brocken in 2019, with the members during our 25 th anniversary. Photo: FEDECRAIL archives

TIME TO SAY GOODBYE !!

At the end of the AGM 2024 in Bilbao on May 4th 2024, after formally closing the Annual Meeting, my term as board member and president of FEDECRAIL ends, exactly after 7 years. I was elected by the members during the AGM of FEDECRAIL 2017 on May 5th in Antwerp (Belgium).

It has been an exciting and challenging 7 years, hardly to compress in a few words, but I would like to recall some main points hereunder like:

- ◆ The Paris environmental agreements became reality and we produced “Plan Paris” as part of the Strategic Plan 2017-2022, also accepted by the members during the Antwerp AGM.
- ◆ We held our 25th anniversary in 2019 on the Brocken and in Wernigerode,
- ◆ where Brian Simpson –chairman of the British HRA – called for a more member orientated behaviour of FEDECRAIL. The board agreed with that call and changed courses.
- ◆ 2020, Covid came from China and visited almost the whole world. it changed our way of working drastically.
- ◆ The board and officers started to meet online in a monthly pattern instead of quarterly physical meetings somewhere in Europe.
- ◆ As a positive result the meeting costs were reduced a great deal.



- ◆ It made it possible that we could offer the members a 50 % reduction on the membership fees for 2020 and 2021.
- ◆ In the same period, BREXIT changed from a rumour into realism and the UK left the EU with as a result that HRA left our federation.
- ◆ In February 2022 the Russian – Ukraine war started. With members in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, in in the nearby countries like Poland, it asked for special but also unknown attention.
- ◆ following the military situation, the prices for fuels, were rising with an unknown intensity,
- ◆ The connection of having less visitors because of COVID and the quick rise of the price of fuels, made 2022 and 2023 very complex years for the whole of the European heritage rail world..

In this altering world, we found our way again as a representative body under ERA and were able to renew and strengthen our position. We started the Tramway Group, renewed the communication and had to find a new banker when in Belgium no Bank wanted to serve our type of Organisation anymore. As a result we are banking now in Sweden.

We became more and more connected with Europa Nostra, the European Heritage Alliance, the European Heritage Hub and we initiated together with the Global organisation for heritage road vehicles – FIVA – the European Platform for Working Industrial and Mobile Heritage (WIMH) which is working very intensive on different fronts. I will stay on for a year (until AGM 2025) to represent FEDECRAIL in the WIMH platform and pay special

attention to Fossil Fuels.

Leaving the board of Fedecrail in the coming days, I do this in the trust that in the 7 years prescribed here above in which we also renewed the board, that this will bring the necessary new energy in the organization.

I have felt it as a great honour to serve you as FEDECRAIL's president. I am very much aware that the progress made has only been possible because of the teamwork of the members of the board and our officers, very often supported by FEDECRAIL members on the activity platform FEDECRAIL will further evaluate in the future as well.

I wish the European Heritage Railway world and our European Umbrella FEDECRAIL a bright future. I will follow the developments where possible in the trust that we has been developed ourselves as a recognised firm part of the European Heritage Identity.

Jaap Nieweg
President of FEDECRAIL



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Index

Jaap Nieweg: Time to say Goodbye !!	1
HOG Summer Meeting	3
EUROPA NOSTRA: Policy Monitor	3
Chris Smyth — an obituary	4
FEDECRAIL is looking for you ...	5
WATTRAIN conference 2024 in Italy	6
Diesel gala with a hint of steam (UK)	6

Heritage Operations Group:

HOG Summer Meeting in September

At the meeting in November 2023 in Frankfurt we said we would hold an extra in person meeting at a member railway. We are delighted to announce that the Scottish Railway Preservation Society has agreed to host the meeting on Saturday 21st September. We are looking for a number of speakers to give their views not only on the challenges of running main line, but on the challenges of running on your own infrastructure. The meeting will be held in Bo'ness which is close to Edinburgh airport and a bus ride from Linlithgow station on the main line from Edinburgh to Glasgow. There are hotels available in Bo'ness for overnight accommodation before and after the meeting. More details will be available closer to meeting.

Gottfried Aldrian, Steve Wood and Ian Leigh

EUROPA NOSTRA:

European Heritage Hub - Policy Monitor

The European Heritage Hub project continues to develop. One of the latest steps has been to

launch the EHH *Policy Monitor* mapping out policies impacting on cultural and natural heritage at both a European and a national government level. Policy subjects include heritage preservation, international cultural relations, 'green transition', inclusion and accessibility. While the first steps have been data collection, the longer term objectives are "to analyse, observe trends and identify gaps across the policy and regulatory environment". This project should create a valuable source of reference for relevant policies in your own country.

Preliminary research has begun and, in addition to EU policies etc, detailed information already logged in for national policies of several countries (including Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and UK). Research is ongoing on a second batch of countries and the aim is to try to cover all individual countries of Europe by this autumn. The plan is to incorporate new policies and updates on a regular basis.

A "click and browse" is recommended on the relevant section of the EHH website:

<https://www.europeanheritagehub.eu/policy-monitor/>

***Peter Ovenstone - Secretary,
Working Industrial & Mobile Heritage Group***

CHRIS SMYTH — an Obituary

News has reached us of the death on Friday 15.03 of Chris Smyth, a well-known Friend of FEDECRAIL. Chris held roles in several UK organisations over at least 50 years, including the Board of the Heritage Railway Association and predecessor bodies (1996 - 2018). He held memberships in a very large number of UK heritage railways and museums. Over the years he undertook many active roles in particular with the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway and its related Vintage Carriages Trust. Other active involvements included the UK National Rail Heritage Awards (Trustee) and the Association of British Transport & Engineering Museums (Committee member).

Chris had been a strong supporter ever since the idea of a Europe wide representative body for rail heritage was first proposed. He participated actively in almost all our conferences from the “pre FEDECRAIL era” in 1989 right through to our Jubilee Conference at Wernigerode in 2019. A memorial event is being planned at the Worth Valley Railway later this year to which all friends and colleagues will be very welcome (for details once confirmed please contact:

ovenstone@edecrail.org)

Our President, Jaap Nieweg has some strong personal memories. His first meeting with Chris was at the inaugural FEDECRAIL conference in 1994 (when Jaap had just become a young and progressive general manager of SHM Stoomtram Hoorn-Medemblik and also first Chairman of the newly founded HRN, Dutch national umbrella organisation). He recalls entering right away into a lively wide-ranging discussion with Chris about the future of heritage railways. At the time, Chris was chairing the annual Coach Award Committee for UK umbrella body ARPS (a predecessor to HRA).

The discussion included the story of the steam tramway coach NTM C205 (used for 40 years as a dwelling house) which was being undertaken as a major restoration project by SHM. This led to two visits to Hoorn by Chris and colleagues from his Award Committee and encouragement to enter the coach in the competition. The outcome was selection as award winner for the year, the trophy being presented to Jaap at an ARPS meeting at



Photo 2012: John Crane

Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway. Later, Chris wrote an article about SHM for the *ARPS Journal* under the heading “Not Invented Here” discussing the issue of the negative impact on the image of heritage railways of sidings full of derelict vehicles awaiting care and attention. Chris cited the good example of SHM in making the effort to move such vehicles to a location well out of sight of the operating railway seen by visitors. Chris’ determination to develop “heritage rail without frontiers” was a feature of several more discussions with Jaap – and many others – over the years.

Another result of these links was a “formal twinning” between SHM and the Bluebell Railway which was marked by a loco exchange – an SHM tramway loco spent two weeks operating between Sheffield Park and Horsted Keynes. A year later the Bluebell loco ‘Fenchurch’ was a guest in Hoorn for several weeks. *“With the death of Chris Smyth we have lost a special friend.”* (Jaap Nieweg)

Jaap Nieweg and Peter Ovenstone



FEDECRAIL on social media

You can now follow us on both Facebook and Instagram. Please like us and share our posts so we get a wider spread. Those of you who have Facebook can also apply to join our group:

[fedecrail official group](#)

Call for content for social media

FEDECRAIL is currently working with its social media, we have both an Instagram and Facebook account. On these pages we wish to share content from our members but also put together content that shows our members. We are now looking for both pictures and small film clips that we can use, we will not be able to fully show who took the film or picture. You contact Mimmi Mickelsen at mickelsen@fedecrail.org to submit material.

Content creator

FEDECRAIL is looking for you who are interested in creating content for its social media. One or more are wanted who are used to making content that is noticed, liked and shared on social media. In the assignment, you will also contact members for

small interviews, get content contributions and the like. In your application, we would also like to see what you have created, so please link to any page or images/films you have produced.

Contact us for more information: contact@fedecrail.org

The assignment is as a volunteer

Call for officers

FEDECRAIL is in an interesting and expansive phase, which means that we are now looking for more volunteers who can contribute to various different tasks.

We are in need of, among other things:

- Administrative support
- Film and image editing
- Event planning
- Content managers
- Specialists in both trains and tramway specialists in various areas for working groups.
- Layout for reports and materials

Are you interested in contributing further to Fedecrail's development at all levels? Then you are more than welcome to notify us of your interest, preferably with a shorter CV on A4. We are looking for people of all ages FEDECRAIL is a business that stands for diversity and inclusion.



WATTRAIN Conference 2024 in Italy

WATTRAIN (the World Alliance of Tourist Trams and Trains, WATTRAIN.net) is preparing its 2024 Conference. The Conference is open to anyone interested in the future of the Heritage Railways around the world. Previous Conferences were held in Japan in 2015 and in Frisco (Texas, USA) in 2018; the 2021 Conference was not possible because of Covid-19. The Conference will be held (in English) in Castellammare di Stabia, just South of Naples (Italy). We expect the arrival of the participants on Friday, July 19, 2024. The Conference will start at 9.00 am on Saturday, July 20, 2024, and end at lunchtime on Sunday, July 21, 2024. The Conference will take place at the Hotel dei Congressi, Viale Puglia 45, Castellammare di Stabia.

The Conference will be focused on the future of Heritage Railways. Its theme will be *“Ensuring Growth Through Sharing of Best Practices”*. Our Keynote Speaker at the Gala Dinner will be David Morgan, MBE, TD, President Emeritus of WATTRAIN and of FEDECRAIL. He will elaborate on *“The value to Heritage Operators of Shared Information and Mutual Support”*.

Participants are invited to present 15 min. papers on one of the following topics: a) Future availability of fossil fuels and of alternative fuels (including Bio Coal varieties), also considering environment policies and practices; b) Resilience – with the aim of identifying how to improve the sector’s resilience, c) Sustainability; d) Options for insurance; e) Volunteer management and human resources; and many other topics. WATTRAIN looks forward to the interested parties to state their intention to present a paper at the Conference.

WATTRAIN has secured a block of double rooms at the Hotel dei Congressi from Friday, July 19, 2024 to Sunday, July 21, 2024. FEDECRAIL members are especially welcome! The President of WATTRAIN (Stefano Benazzo, sbenazzo@gmail.com) is available to answer any question and provide the registration form.

Stefano Benazzo
President of WATTRAIN



Goods trains in the view of the photographers.

Leighton Buzzard Railway

Diesel Gala with a Hint of Steam

The Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway (LBGNR) proudly curates one of the largest collections of two-foot gauge heritage diesel locomotives in the UK. On Monday 27th May (the Late Spring Bank Holiday), they will be showcasing them in a new event for 2024: a ‘Diesel Gala with a Hint of Steam!’

The day will feature no fewer than nine diesel locomotives hauling a variety of passenger and freight trains up and down the challenging gradients of the line, including double- and triple-headed consists. As well as a total of nine passenger departures to choose from throughout the



„Peter Pan“.



A rare photo motif: armoured Motor Rail Simplex 2182. Photos (3): LBNGR

day, there will be six freight departures and locomotive positioning moves, as well as at least seven internal combustion locomotives performing demonstration trains on one of Britain's only double-tracked narrow-gauge lines.

A full timetable will be available in the next few weeks and will be published on our web site and social media feeds, so visitors can choose the locomotives behind which they'd like to ride.

A souvenir timetable will be available on the day, included with the ticket. Guidance will also be available on the best places to snap photographs, since

there will be some never-before seen train arrangements, including some locomotives which have not run on the LBNGR mainline in over ten years.

For those who still need their steam fix, LBGNR is very proud to announce that Kerr Stuart 0-4-0 Wren-class 'Peter Pan' of 1922 – expertly restored by Graham Morris – will be hauling passenger trains, possibly even double-headed with another very special “small” engine... Visit www.buzzrail.uk.

LBNGR



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Deadline for textes and photos is June 8th

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