



UPDATE No.65

European Federation of Museum & Tourist Railways

December 2024

Dear members and friends of mobile heritage,

As we approach the end of 2024, it is time to reflect on the year gone by and look ahead to the opportunities that lie ahead. For FEDECRAIL, 2024 has been a year marked by change, commitment, and continued efforts to secure the future of moving heritage. We have welcomed new members to our board, held two conferences, and strengthened our presence on social media to reach a wider audience.

Throughout the year, we have continued to advocate for and create opportunities for the preservation of moving heritage within the EU. At the same time, we have developed new ways of working to meet the demands of today and the needs of our members. This has been challenging, especially as we are still recovering from the impact of the pandemic. The reduced membership fees introduced during COVID have not yet been restored to their previous levels, and we are facing rising costs for travel and accommodation, even though much of our work is conducted digitally.

Despite these challenges, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to investing in you, our members. We have ensured that every membership contributes to tangible benefits and have continued to strengthen our collective efforts to preserve heritage. This is a commitment we take pride in — and one we hope you feel a part of.

As we look ahead to 2025, we see a year full of new opportunities. Our annual plan for 2025 is at the forefront, and we are excited to work together with you to bring it to life. With your support, dedication, and shared passion for heritage, I am confident that we can achieve even greater progress.

With these thoughts, I, together with the entire board, would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for your support, dedication, and trust. Let us continue to work together for the future of moving heritage!



Photo: Mimmi Mickelsen

*Warm regards,
Mimmi Mickelsen
President, FEDECRAIL*

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Fedecrail 2025: A Year of Progress and Transformation

As we enter 2025, Fedecrail is ready to embrace a year filled with new opportunities and challenges, guided by the needs of our members and our mission to preserve rail-bound heritage. The annual plan for 2025 reflects our commitment to member collaboration, innovative working methods, and the continued evolution of our organization.

In 2025, we aim to strengthen dialogue with members and provide enhanced support through expert networks, resources for legislation and safety, and tailored solutions to address key challenges such as maintenance and sustainability. Additionally, we will increase the visibility of her-

itage rail contributions, particularly highlighting the unique cultural value of Eastern Europe's railways.

We are implementing changes in our working groups and methods to align with modern demands and foster collaboration across regions. New initiatives, like the launch of a youth-focused program inspired by Erasmus, will promote engagement and skill-sharing among younger generations. Our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion will continue with the development of adaptable policies for members.

From January onwards, we will present the full annual plan, including a detailed financial report on recent years and a comprehensive agenda of meetings, webinars, and activities. Key highlights include our annual conference and general assembly on the Isle of Man in May, which promises to be an exciting gathering at this historic site,

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as well as increased digital interaction to ensure accessibility and engagement.

Fedecrail remains a strong advocate for rail heritage within the EU, prioritizing legislation that reflects the unique needs of heritage railways and tramways. By working closely with the EU Commission, Parliament, and organizations like ERA, we aim to safeguard rail-based cultural heritage and promote sustainable tourism.

A significant focus in 2025 will also be on data collection, ensuring our advocacy efforts are backed by robust statistics. By highlighting metrics such as visitor numbers, volunteer contributions, and environmental impacts, we strengthen our lobbying efforts and build awareness of the importance of rail heritage.

Fedecrail's ambitious agenda for 2025 sets the stage for a transformative year. Together with our members, we look forward to advancing our shared mission and creating a sustainable future for Europe's rail-bound heritage. Let us move forward with unity and determination to ensure our efforts leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Mimmi Mickelsen

derrepresented groups, and inspire younger generations to join us in preserving rail-bound heritage.

Representation is also central to FEDECRAIL's mission. A diverse and inclusive membership base brings fresh ideas and perspectives, enriching our work and strengthening our impact. It ensures that rail heritage reflects the rich cultural diversity of Europe, making it a shared legacy for all. Furthermore, seeing individuals from varied backgrounds in active roles sends a strong message: everyone has a place in FEDECRAIL.

A clear and inclusive code of conduct not only enhances collaboration but also reinforces FEDECRAIL's reputation as a modern, forward-thinking organization. It demonstrates our commitment to being a safe, welcoming, and ethical space for members across all regions and generations.

By embracing these values, FEDECRAIL ensures that we continue to grow as a vibrant and dynamic organization. Together, we can create a community where everyone's contributions are recognized, and where rail-bound heritage remains an inspiring force for future generations.

FEDECRAIL: Driving Equality, Inclusion, and Diversity Forward.

FEDECRAIL Council

A Code of Conduct: Strengthening Equality, Inclusion, and Diversity

FEDECRAIL is dedicated to fostering a positive, inclusive environment that celebrates diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. As part of this commitment, we are developing a **code of conduct** to guide our work and interactions, creating a strong foundation for equality, inclusion, and diversity within our organization.

A code of conduct ensures that every member, volunteer, and stakeholder is treated with respect and fairness. It sets clear expectations for behavior, fostering an atmosphere where everyone feels welcome, valued, and empowered to contribute. By explicitly addressing these principles, we aim to attract more diverse members, including un-



Engaging speakers in St. Quentin



Marie-Noëlle Polino on the microphone

weekend will guide us as we refine our plans. Additionally, the board introduced a draft for the 2025 Annual Plan, the 2024 Annual Report, and the budget, outlining the financial developments of 2024 and our projections for 2025. A notable highlight was the decision to open corporate membership without voting rights, a move we believe will significantly benefit our members.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for our annual conference and AGM, which will take place from May 8–12, 2025, on the Isle of Man. Full details are available on our website.

Key topics during our Saint Quentin sessions included:

- A review of the challenges faced in 2024, with a short summary of the Annual Plan and financial outcomes.
- Updates on visits to Poland and Lithuania, including insights on Eastern Europe and collaboration with NERHT to attract more members.
- Presentations on the 2025 Annual Plan

Reflections from Saint Quentin and Plans for 2025

The first weekend of November brought us to Saint Quentin, where we were delighted to meet many of you in person. The weekend was filled with productive working group sessions and valuable discussions in larger groups. Engaging speakers shared insights on creating added value and tourist attractions, the history of Saint Quentin's past tramways, and preserving historic trains in France.

Our General Meeting focused heavily on FEDECRAIL's financial situation, which, compared to previous years, is less favorable. This is a matter the board has been actively addressing. During the meeting, we presented updates on the constitution review, the progress of our working groups, and the exciting launch of our new youth initiative in 2025.

Member dialogue remains crucial to FEDECRAIL's work. The valuable input we received during the



In the depot



Tram in a museum. Photos (4): Mimmi Mickelsen

and budget, focusing on members' priorities.

- A review of the constitution and the need for revisions to benefit all members.
- Exciting developments in working groups, including changes in HOG and TG leadership, the Youth Initiative, and potential EU funding opportunities.

As we prepare for 2025, FEDECRAIL will also reach out to umbrella members early in the year to schedule individual meetings. These sessions will provide an opportunity for you to share your questions and aspirations while allowing us to outline our plans for the year ahead.

We thank all who joined us in Saint Quentin and look forward to working together to advance the preservation and promotion of rail-bound heritage in 2025. Together, we can make a lasting impact!

Mimmi Mickelsen

Conference 2025 on the Isle of Man: Reserve your Place!

Join Us on the Isle of Man for the Fedecrail Annual Conference 2025!

Step into the heart of European rail and tram heritage at the Fedecrail Annual Conference 2025, taking place on the stunning Isle of Man. This idyllic island, known for its rich history and picturesque landscapes, offers the perfect backdrop for meaningful discussions, networking, and unforgettable experiences.

As a participant, you'll enjoy:

- Exclusive excursions to historic steam trains, tramways, and rail museums.
- Engaging sessions with expert speakers sharing insights and innovations in the field.
- A comprehensive welcome package, including a Go Card for exploring the island's unique transport systems.

Don't miss out on early bird pricing — register before January 31 to save! Whether you're a professional, volunteer, or enthusiast, this event is the ultimate opportunity to connect, learn, and contribute to the preservation of rail and tram heritage.

Reserve your place and be part of shaping the future of rail and tram heritage!

<https://fedecrail.org/events/conference-2025-isle-of-man/>

HOG

Caution also with ETCS

Trains must be able to stop

There have been two train collision accidents that have occurred in the UK one in 2023 and one in 2024. In both cases they involved disk braked, and relatively light weight class 158 diesel multiple units, built by British Rail between 1998 and 200. Both accidents occurred on the national network, during autumn in the evening and are the result of

sliding by the protecting signal. Rail head contamination and lack of working sanders played a part. The first accident occurred near Salsbury and the trains collided in a tunnel. The second was in mid Wales a head on collision on an ETCS signalled single line, when one train was unable to stop at the end of a passing loop.

We don't usually report on accidents unless the urgent joint review procedures are invoked. But we mention these two accidents for three issues: ETCS whilst designed with Automatic Train Protection Functionality it is no better than other system if the trains are unable to stop. Early disk braked rolling stock is now becoming "heritage". If you acquire any disk brake stock, you will need to consider how to maintain it, including how you maintain the Wheel Slide Protection equipment.

Leaf fall, do you need to do more to reduce the amount of line side vegetation? Our recommendation is to plan now so you are ready to fell trees when the birds have finished nesting. Also do you check your locomotive sanders? Are they filled with sand and not blocked?

Ian Leigh

ERA

4th Multimodal Conference

J. Doppelbauer says goodbye

The 4th ERA Multimodal Conference took place on 9 December 2024 in Brussels. In the first part of the conference, which was moderated by Josef Doppelbauer (ERA Executive Director), there were contributions from Tilly Metz (Member of the European Parliament), George Gilkinet (Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport) and Magda Kopczynska (Director General of DG MOVE). Among other things, they emphasised the importance of reducing emissions and creating fair and equal conditions for all modes of transport. It was also pointed out that national egoisms were a hindrance and the need to move from a 'patchwork' to a standardised European network. At the same time, the need to have more

financial resources available for the ERA and the railway sector in general was addressed. The second part, moderated by Keir Fitch (Head of Rail Interoperability and Safety Unit), focused on strengthening multimodal freight transport.

The event concluded with a farewell party for Josef Doppelbauer, who is retiring from his role as ERA Executive Director. Josef Doppelbauer's ten-year term of office included forward-looking decisions such as the 4th railway package. In numerous meetings, also within the framework of the NRA (Network of Representative Bodies), we were able to get to know Josef as an expert with enormous knowledge of the railway, who also had a great deal of understanding of the problems and difficulties of museum railways.

All that remains is to wish Josef Doppelbauer all the best for his retirement.

Gottfried Aldrian

WIMH

Valuable Factsheet

Pierluigi Scoizzato new member

With the summer break now well behind us, the Working Industrial & Mobile Heritage platform has increased its outreach efforts. Members of the new European Parliament elected in June have now been appointed to the various parliamentary committees and we (WIHM) continue to work to secure support from MEPs on those committees of particular relevance to our cause.

The new Factsheet which spells out our key concerns on a single page has been very valuable and has been sent so far to more than 30 MEPs. Support from members in using the factsheet for any lobbying at a national level would be very welcome. The factsheet can be downloaded from the News Page of the Fedecrail website: www.fedecrail.org

We had a very positive face to face meeting in Oc-

tober with Hannes Heide MEP, the group coordinator for the Social Democrat party members on the EP Cultural Committee. Usefully, he already has some knowledge of heritage railways in his home country, Austria! Further meetings will follow with other MEPs in the months ahead. It is expected that the process of appointing the new EU Commissioners will be completed towards the end of the year and, once again, we will be in contact with relevant Commissioners and their Directorates.

Our Working Group member Hildebrand de Boer gave a useful report about the work of WIMH to the annual conference of ERIH European Route of Industrial Heritage (one of the WIMH partner bodies) at Lodz, Poland - raising awareness to a new audience, most of whom had not previously heard about our campaign. We have recently welcomed FEDECRAIL Vice-President Pierluigi Scoizzato as a new member of the WIMH Working Group to strengthen the FEDECRAIL team.

A follow up to last year's successful conference in Katowice, Poland had been planned for this autumn. However, the event has now had to be postponed - the *European Coal and Steel Heritage* conference is now scheduled to be held, again in Katowice, on Thu 10.04.25 + Fri 11.04.25. The

original dates had coincided with an EP Session in Strasbourg - a "silver lining" of the date change is that a similar clash will not arise, and we hope that one or more MEPs will take part.

Peter Ovenstone - Secretary, WIMH Working Industrial & Mobile Heritage group

32nd International Light Railway Meeting 2024 in Denmark

Since 1991 the major annual event for vintage narrow gauge industrial railway enthusiasts in continental Europe, the 'Feldbahntreffen' has been a valuable source for narrow gauge networking. During the years, the "treffen" has been held by different hosts at historic narrow-gauge railways across Europe.

The 32. meeting was hosted by the Hedeland vin-



Dutch steam locomotive no. 6 (Orenstein & Koppel 11735/1928) from Stoomtrein Katwijk



The traditional group photo with the participants of the light railway meeting. Photos (2): Anders Dørge

tage railway (HVB) in Denmark.

110 European enthusiasts from Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, Sweden, Finland, Romania, Ukraine and Poland joined more than 40 volunteers from HVB in deepening cooperation and bringing new partners together.

Apart from presentations from participating societies, networking, intense and varied traffic on the 5 km long HVB-line, the meeting also offered visits to usually off-limits workshops and storage buildings. As the Dutch line Stoomtrein Katwijk Leiden shares the gauge 700 mm with HVB, the Dutch had brought four vehicles with them, adding a nice flavour to the Danish stock for interesting traffic during the meeting's four days.

Next year the meeting takes place in Germany at the Stumpfwaldbahn near Kaiserslautern while the meeting in 2026 will be hosted in United Kingdom for the first time, at the Apedale Valley Light Railway, Stoke-on-Trent.

Anders Dørge

Meeting of Nordic Railway Museums “Conservation through utilisation”

Norsk Jernbanemuseum hosted the Nordic Railway Museum Meeting between 13-15th November onboard our vintage steel train «Stålvogntoget». The train departed from Hamar station to Støren via Dovrebanen with destination to the UNESCO world Heritage town of Røros. The return trip from Røros ended at Hamar through the Rørosbanen.

The meeting was held on wheels centered on the theme of “preservation through use”. Questions like “Do we use our collections, or can we end up losing them?” “How does wear and tear affect authenticity of the vehicles?” were presented from the perspective of each country and proved to give insights and good discussions onboard the train.

We thank our colleagues from the Nordic national



The 'Stålvogntoget' in the light of the sun

railway museums for visiting us and we look forward to meeting up at Gävle next Spring to continue discussing and cooperate on railway heritage.

Vasco T. Duarte, Konservator Jernbanehistorie

Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme

Platform Shelter and Goods Wagon

Restoration projects completed

On October 31st, 2024, the Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme (CFBS) metre-gauge railway inaugurated two heritage items that had been under restoration since 2011 and 2016, respectively.

The first was the wooden platform shelter at St Valery-Canal works, previously a halt in the days of commercial services on the railway. The shelter

had been decaying since the end of such services in December 1972. In 2002, the shelter was dismantled as it was about to collapse completely, and the parts were placed in storage. In 2011, a CFBS volunteer photographed and carefully separated the various components, with a view to re-using those that were still in fair condition. These parts were moved to the volunteer's private workshop in 2015, where they were cleaned and prepared for restoration. In 2023, two other volunteers joined the project. A concrete foundation slab was cast for the shelter in March, followed by a brick base in August. Re-assembly of the wood structure followed and was completed in September 2024. Some 1,000 hours of volunteer work had been required for this project.

The second item restored was a 4-door open wagon built for carrying sugar-beet, at the time one of the main categories of freight shipped on the railway. Supplied in 1920 by the Belgian manufacturer "La Construction", and numbered U 13021, this wagon was part of a series built to replace rolling stock destroyed during WWI. After the closure in 1965 of the sugar-beet shredding plant in Lanchères (between St Valery sur Somme and



Railway platform shelter

Cayeux), this wagon and many others became redundant. It was preserved in 1971 by the newly-created CFBS preservation society, but had to remain out of doors for several decades due to a shortage of sheltered storage space. In 1993, despite having become almost a ruin, the wagon was listed as a technical heritage item. A restoration project was launched in 2016, and went through

several phases:

2016 - 2017: administrative procedures to obtain grants and subsidies, preliminary studies and purchase of materials

2017 - 2020: dismantling of salvageable parts, reconstruction of steel structural elements and temporary assembly with nuts and bolts

2021 - 2023:



Goods wagon. Photos: Geoffrey Nickson

woodwork, painting and final assembly using hot-riveting

2024: fitting the floorboards, the accessories, the markings and the tarpaulin.

Geoffrey Nickson — Administrator and Board Secretary, CFBS

The 8th International Conference of Early Railways

The Railway & Canal Historical Society is for everyone with an interest in the history of transport in Britain — not just inland waterways and railways, but also tramroads, roads, aviation, coastal shipping, ports and pipelines — from pre-Roman times to the day before yesterday. From 23 to 26 September 2025, the 8th International Conference of Early Railways will take place at the Central Hall, Dolphin Centre, in Darlington (UK). Manikandan Venkataramanan, a WATTRAIN Board member, has been invited to present his synopsis on the history of early railways in the Mysore State in India.

The conference, conducted in English, will be similar to the previous successful International Early Railways Conferences. Topics will cover the earliest waggonway systems through to the earliest main line and industrial systems around the world up to the 1870s. Delegates are encouraged to attend in person at the Central Hall, Darlington, accommodation available at nearby hotels in the town cen-

tre. Overseas delegates, unable to attend in person, could participate online.

A recording of each day's events, including delegates' questions and comments, will be placed on YouTube for the benefit of overseas delegates living in different time-zones around the world. Observations and questions to and from overseas delegates may be contributed to speakers via email. Responses will also be circulated. Delegates will be emailed two weeks before the conference begins with the Conference programme. This will include the Teams 'invitation' link.

Further details at: <https://rchs.org.uk/early-railways-conference-combined/>

More news:

The International Association of Transport and Communications Museums (IATM):

Next year, we will meet in Frankfurt and Mannheim from September 14–17, 2025. The theme of the conference will be "*The AI Shift: Transforming Transport and Communication Museums*".

<https://www.iatm.museum/>

Friends of the Wagons-Lits :

Terry Bye produces and circulates a bi-monthly well illustrated Newsletter Pullman News in a PDF format. Anyone who would like to receive it please contact him at t.bye2@outlook.com .



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Deadline for text and photos is February 8th

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