



President's Word:

## Listening, collaborating, and leading forward – together

As we look ahead to our upcoming conference on the Isle of Man, we do so with both joy and curiosity. There's something special about coming together in person – surrounded by tracks, vehicles, and passionate people – that reminds us why we exist: to support, strengthen, and highlight the European heritage rail sector.

Over the first part of the year, we've been trying to do just that – **listen**. One of the key areas we've started to explore is **insurance** – a complex and sometimes frustrating topic for many of our members. We know that some organizations have found excellent solutions, while others are left navigating unclear conditions, high premiums, or a lack of suitable options. This is a space where we hope, over time, to provide support by gathering knowledge and, perhaps, creating shared strategies.

We recognize that every member organization has its own reality, its own context, and its own challenges. And that's exactly why we – as a federation – must constantly ask ourselves: How can we **best support you?** What do you need, and what **can we build together?**

FEDECRAIL's greatest strength is not only that we represent so many – but that we genuinely **want to understand** and shape something collectively.

There are also important developments happening in the wider world. We especially want to highlight that **Oana Gherghinescu** has been appointed as the new **Executive Director of ERA** (European Union Agency for Railways).

Holding a doctorate in international economics and with over 22 years of professional experience – including 11 within ERA – she steps into a key role for the future of railway safety and interoperability in Europe. Her background in sustainability, international project leadership, and her strategic mindset will undoubtedly shape the direction of European regulation going forward. We look forward to following and engaging with her in this new capacity.

And finally – **the Isle of Man**. We are incredibly excited about this year's lineup. The

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program includes everything from technical insight and heritage dialogue to inclusion, policy and forward-thinking strategy. It's a chance to meet, share experiences and discover new ways forward – together.

We hope you're just as excited as we are – and perhaps even curious to take a ride on the Manx Electric Railway (purely for research purposes, of course).

See you soon!

*Warm regards,  
Mimmi Mickelsen  
President, FEDECRAIL*

### UPDATE No. 67

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## Financial Update:

# Transparency and Action for a Sustainable Future

2024 has been a challenging year for FEDECRAIL, as well as for many of our member organizations. The lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, inflation, and reduced participation in events have all affected our operations.

We want to be fully transparent: one of the most significant issues this year has been a **budget deficit** of approximately €35,250. This loss is being covered by our financial reserves. While we are fortunate to have these reserves, we acknowledge that this is **not a sustainable solution** for the future.

Our financial downturn has been ongoing since 2019, beginning with the pandemic. During that time, we significantly reduced membership fees to support our members. Participation in conferences and events has also remained low in the years following, which has limited our revenue even further.

In addition to these challenges, we have faced **serious administrative issues** with our **bank in Belgium**, which made day-to-day financial operations extremely difficult. We are pleased to confirm that after more than two years, this situation has now been **fully resolved**, and we have successfully re-established stable access to our Belgian bank account.

Faced with these financial constraints, we did consider **halting all activities** within FEDECRAIL — including participation in meetings with ERA and the European Commission, international representation, and our own conferences—as a way to minimize the loss. However, we made a conscious decision that representing and defending **the interests of our members** was a **higher priority**.

Instead of stopping our work entirely, we **carefully evaluated each activity** to ensure it served the interests of our members. We prioritized strategic engagements, limited our expenses where possible, and continued our core mission of advocacy, support, and visibility for Europe's heritage rail sector.

We are now implementing further measures to

secure our financial future:

- Gradually restoring membership fees to sustainable levels.
- Introducing a modest increase of approximately 5% in 2025.
- Exploring new revenue streams, including commercial and trade associate memberships.
- Applying for external funding to support key initiatives.
- Strengthening participation-based income through conferences and networking events.

The funds used in 2024 were **reinvested directly** into work that supports and strengthens our sector. We believe that this choice, although financially difficult, was the right one to protect the long-term voice and influence of our members in European-level discussions.

Looking ahead, our mission remains clear: deliver meaningful value to our members while building a **stable and resilient organization**.

Your continued support makes this possible. Together, we will secure a strong future for Europe's heritage rail sector.

*Mimmi Mickelsen, President FEDECRAIL*

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## FEDECRAIL Nominations:

### Board for 2025 – 2028

We are pleased to present the three nominated candidates for the FEDECRAIL Board for the term 2025 to 2028. These individuals bring valuable experience, deep commitment to heritage railway preservation, and an active presence within the European heritage railway movement:



**Philippe Dupont** – nominated by UNECTO (France) to continue in his role as Vice President. He serves as the President of the Chemin de Fer Touristique du Vermandois and is actively engaged in heritage train operations in

France. Philippe has the full support and confidence of his organisation.



**Dr. Darius Liutikas** – Director of Aukštaitijos Siaurasis Geležinkelis (Lithuania) and senior researcher in tourism and mobility. He has a strong academic background and public policy experience, with leadership in cultural heritage

railway projects.



**Pierluigi Scoizzato** – nominated to continue in his role as Vice President. He has served many years within FEDECRAIL, contributing to key initiatives including youth exchange programmes and regulatory development. Former President of Socie-

tà Veneta Ferrovie and current President of FIFTM (Italy), Pierluigi has been a member of the FEDECRAIL Board since 2015.

We are confident that their continued leadership will strengthen FEDECRAIL's work over the next three years, supporting both continuity and renewal in our shared mission.

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## Let's Grow Together

### Join and Shape the Future of FEDECRAIL

At FEDECRAIL, we believe that collaboration is at the heart of preserving Europe's railway and tramway heritage. To continue this important work, we need **more members** to join us—more voices, more knowledge, and more shared passion.

We know that **stronger networks** lead to stronger results, and we are confident that growing our community will benefit not only FEDECRAIL but the entire heritage rail sector. That's why we are inviting all current members to help us spread the word and encourage others—organizations, institutions, and individuals—to become part of our European family.

But we also want to **hear from you**.

- What topics would you like to see in future webinars?
- Which areas of our work are most valuable to you?
- Are there challenges you'd like help tackling, or ideas you'd like to develop with others?

We are especially keen to see more people **actively engaged** in our work—whether in working groups, advocacy, or project collaboration. Your knowledge and perspective matter. Whether you're new to the community or have been part of it for years, we warmly welcome your involvement.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about becoming a member or taking a more active role, please **reach out to us**. We're happy to guide you and help you discover how you can make a difference within FEDECRAIL.

Let's build a stronger future together—for our history, for our members, and for generations to come.

*The FEDECRAIL Board*

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HOG:

## The Working Group Asks for ...

At the weekend a steam hauled train on the national network Cambrian Coast line in northwest England set fire to some very dry vegetation and caused considerable disruption to the normal service trains. So, as you and your members prepare to start running trains again, have you checked that you have done everything you need to do in your Safety Management System? Does your SMS need an update? Have you checked the lineside vegetation and considered how you will mitigate



the fire risk? Do you have plans in place if a line-side fire does occur? Had you had a chat with the local fire chief on when you will be running, what the risk is, and how to access your land? Have you spoken to the local politicians on the risks and benefits of running steam (and diesel) trains on your railway? Have you had the local press down to visit for a good (or bad) news story? Finally, have you decided who takes the decision (and with what input) to stop running or switch to diesel operation?

HOG meetings – we have been holding online HOG meetings and have representatives from Germany, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Austria, UK, the Netherlands and Belgium. We usually hold the meetings in English, but the last one was in German. I am hoping to arrange a meeting in French in July. So, my question is what is stopping more people from joining, from other countries? Is it a language issue? We could have meetings in Spanish or Italian or Polish for example but then they become country specific. We can extend the use of Wordly our AI translation programme to the meeting for multiple languages, would that help? Or are the meeting requests going to the wrong people? Or are the agenda's just not interesting enough?

please let me know at [leigh@fedecrail.org](mailto:leigh@fedecrail.org)

*Ian Leigh*

## WIMH News Report:

### **Key Questions to the European Commission**

A recent WIMH development has been to take up an offer from a Polish MEP member of the EP Culture Committee to put some key questions to the European Commission to clarify and raise awareness of our concerns: -

(1) Urging the Commission to take into account the long-term specific needs of the industrial and mobile heritage sector for use of modest amounts of fossil fuels which will result in limited and controlled amount of CO2.

(2) Asking the Commission to take steps to avoid restrictions on cultural heritage fuels when regulations on CO2 emissions are reviewed in future.

(3) Urging greater awareness of the importance of passing knowledge and expertise relating to the operation and maintenance of industrial and mobile heritage to future generations. Asking for active support for educational and promotional initiatives to help meet this goal.

(4) Asking how the Commission plan to raise industrial and mobile heritage to the first level of policy action and protection at a time when Europe – more than ever – needs to showcase its inventiveness, industrial and engineering ingenuity, creativity and historical achievements.



*Testimony to industrial and mobile heritage: SRPS (Scottish Railway Preservation Society) Railtours locomotive 45 690 in Scotland in spring 2018. Photo: Ingrid Schütte*

These themes will be taken forward in our future discussions with MEPS and Commission officials throughout this year and beyond.

These questions will also be used as starting point for organizing a formal hearing by the European Parliament planned for 2026.

*Jaap Nieweg*  
*Peter Ovenstone*  
*Pierluigi Scoizzato*



## A Logo for the WIMH Sector

It is not easy to devise a logo for an organisation that operates at an international level, and this was the case for WIMH. Concentrating in a single sign all the prerogatives, visions and missions of several industrial heritage sectors appeared challenging, and it would have been very easy to leave out some important elements.

Considering that a logo has to be immediately recognisable, it was decided to limit the graphics to the reproduction in full of the meaning of the acronym together with the acronym itself, denoting how everything is 'embraced' by the H of heritage. The colours chosen are closely linked to the world of preservation and we can identify them in the exposed bricks of industrial buildings as well as in cars and motorbikes, railway and tram vehicles.

A logo for WIMH. A next step to communicate our sector as a grown-up organisation. An organisation that connects a very broad spectrum of Industrial and Mobile heritage, acting continuously on the borders throughout Europe and more and more accepted by the European Union as a representant of an important and proud movement in the European society. The logo should strengthen

this development, when used for more direct and greater recognizability. I am convinced that this logo will do, and I thank as FEDECRAIL WIMH officer Pierluigi Scoizzato for this wonderful design.

*Jaap Nieweg*

## WIMH:

### Developments in the Last Weeks

First of all, we had a meeting in Brussels with the assistant of MEP Zoltan Tarr, who is for the EPP the coordinator for the Culture Commission. The meeting was interesting, especially because we had already in October a meeting with Hannes Heide, the Social Democratic Party's coordinator for the Culture Commission. We try to build a bridge between these two MEP's. It makes our three main goals, as brought forward to the new MEP's and the new Commission members in this autumn, clear point for the discussion. They were also forward to the EP by MEPs from Poland (see article "Key questions to commission").

We also did expose our EU Platform for Working Industrial and Mobile Heritage to 7 Commissioners. In the meantime, we are working on future meetings with three of the cabinets. (Environment, Culture & Youth and Jobs, education and skills). I am convinced that because we want to speak about goals to be achieved in the coming 5 years, until the next European Elections, makes us become a more and more grown-up discussion partner.

We found a successor for my work in WIMH as FEDECRAIL's mandate WIMH officer. That is very much needed, because my mandate ends at the end of the 2025 AGM on the Isle of Man. When I stepped back as president, from which position I had been one of the active initiators of the EU Platform from 2020 on, it was practical leave me doing this part of the job, for which we (the board and myself) made an agreement, a mandate. In which beginning (the day of my step back as president), tasks (representing FEDECRAIL in the WIMH organization) and ending of the mandate (when Mimmi will close the 2025 AGM) were well formu-



lated. And I was very clear that I would do this longer than one year. Of course it is very interesting, and I enjoyed the (much) work, but age (75) and health, but foremost the long list of other things already waiting for me for 10 years (the period after my formal retirement as General Manager of the Hoorn – Medemblik Museum stoomtram in 2015) because of my FEDECRAIL activities, should get the attention it deserves.

*Jaap Nieweg*

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Museu del Ferrocarril de Móra la Nova:

## **The Magic of Steam**

**Festival on 17 and 18 May 2025**

The first Móra la Nova Steam Festival was held at the Railway Museum in Móra la Nova In 2024, co-organized with the National Museum of Science and Technology of Catalonia (MNACTEC). The event was a great success and garnered great interest from a diverse audience and, therefore, it will now become a permanent fixture in the annual program. Thus, on May 17th and 18th this year, the second Móra la Nova Steam Festival will take place, with various examples of steam-based tech-

nologies, headed of course, by the locomotives from the golden era of railways.

Once again, visitors will have the opportunity to take a trip aboard steam locomotives such as the Cuco, AM105, and Sharp 120, all of which were present at last year's festival. For this festival, there are two exciting new additions to the lineup. The first is the Olot locomotive and modernist-style cars C117, C31, and C103, with wooden walls, ceilings, and seats, as well as small access balconies at the ends. These were built between 1923 and 1925. This train will connect the carriage shed with the former Commissary, a building currently under restoration, via a new narrow-gauge track constructed in recent months. This exhibit will remain permanently at the museum, thanks to a loan from FGC. The second new addition is the chance to ride aboard the steam locomotive SAF Nº1, built in 1952, and the HT RN passenger car, built in 1892, one of the few broad-gauge cars still preserved in Spain.

This train is on loan from the Asturias Railway Museum in Gijón. Additionally, it will be a great opportunity to admire the other steam locomotives that have yet to be restored but still have a magnificent presence: the Bonita, Mikado, Garrafeta, Mikado Garratt, and Pacific Garratt. All of this will be enhanced by the participation of members of the Retrofuturista Nautilus Association, dressed in



period costumes. The festival aims to offer a broader view of steam technology, not limited to the railway sector, but also including other steam-powered devices, such as tractors and stationary engines. For example, the Barcelona Firefighters will participate for the second time with a steam-powered fire pump dating from the 19th century, built in London by the Merryweather company. The firefighters will demonstrate how to extinguish a fire with what was considered to be the cutting-edge of technology of its time.

Finally, the Commissary area will feature a rideable miniature railway, also with steam locomotives, which will allow visitors to take rides. The complete program can be found on the museum's website: [www.museuferrocarril.cat](http://www.museuferrocarril.cat).

The Second Móra la Nova Steam Festival will have plenty on offer for both steam enthusiasts and to families looking to enjoy a day of discovery.

The Museum would like to once again thank all the collaborators for their participation: MNACTEC, the Móra la Nova Town Hall, the Fundación de los Ferrocarriles Españoles, ADIF, Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya, the Museo del Ferrocarril de Asturias in Gijón, the Plataforma per a la Defensa del Patrimoni Històric dels Bombers de Barcelona, Edmoron Impremta Històrica Ferroviària, and the Retrofuturista Nautilus Association.

*Museu del Ferrocarril de Móra la Nova*

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## Share your Expertise

### 48th IATM Conference September 2025 in Germany

The International Association of Transport and Communication Museums (IATM) - a global umbrella organisation supporting the work of museums in this field - invites you to contribute to the 48th IATM Conference 'The AI Shift: Transforming Transport and Communication Museums', taking place in Frankfurt and Mannheim, Germany, from 14-17 September 2025.

As AI increasingly shapes our work in museums, we are looking for colleagues who want to share their experiences, insights, and projects at the

conference. Whether through presentations, workshops, or real-world case studies, we welcome contributions that explore the impact of AI on museum practice.

AI is already transforming how we manage collections, develop exhibitions, and engage with visitors. Are you experimenting with AI in your daily tasks? Have you integrated AI-driven tools into museum operations? Do you see opportunities or challenges ahead? We want to hear from you!

Your contributions will help us shape an inspiring and thought-provoking program. All presentations will be recorded and made available to IATM members via the website after the conference.

Join us in exploring the future of AI in transport and communication museums. Please share your ideas, comments, and proposals – we look forward to your input!

The submission deadline is 25 April 2025. Please send your submissions to Stefanie Rother at [rother@technikmuseum.berlin](mailto:rother@technikmuseum.berlin).

*IATM Conference Team*

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## 20 Years of ATTS

### International Conference in Turin in December 2025

ATTS (Associazione torinese tram storici) - the association for historic trams in Turin - can look back on 20 years of existence this year. To mark the occasion, an international conference and tram festival will be held in Turin/Italy from 5 - 7 December 2025. The theme of the conference is: 'Trams from the past to the future' - Best practices of museums and societies worldwide. The following topics will be discussed: The role of historic trams in tourism and culture - Public relations and promotion - Volunteering and succession planning - Modelling historic trams - Vehicle restoration to modern standards. Information and contact at

[TTF25@ATTS.TO.IT](mailto:TTF25@ATTS.TO.IT)



Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway:

**2025 Season  
off to a Great Start!**

The first running day of the 2025 season started fantastically for the Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway with more than 300 passengers taking to the trains to celebrate Mothers' Day and hear the opening address by the Town Crier, accompanied by Councillor David Bligh, the 50<sup>th</sup> Mayor of Leighton-Linslade.

The entirely volunteer-run railway put on two steam train services, led by Andrew Barclay 0-6-0T 'Doll' of 1919, and Baldwin 4-6-0T WDLR No. 778 of 1917, with five departures throughout the day. Mums were treated to a free family photo and a potted plant gift, grown and donated by one of the railway's own volunteers, whilst all families and visitors explored the historic Stonehenge Works site and learned about the history of sand quarrying and transport throughout the town. One local mum told the railway: "My husband has lived here for 35 years and yet this was our first visit! We had a great visit and we will definitely be back."

Brian Hockley, head of the Carriage Department, reported on a recent project to upgrade a carriage in the railway's rolling stock, for which Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March was its first outing in revenue-earning ser-



*Photos: LBNGR (2)*

vice. "My team have put in hundreds of hours over the winter closure period, often working in a very cold shed, to completely refit the interior seating



of No. 9, one of our oldest carriages. We completed all the design and fabrication in-house, increasing the number of passengers it can carry and improving comfort at the same time. The skills our volunteers bring are being passed on too, with our newly-formed young persons group learning from the wealth of experience in our team."

The railway's season continues now every Sunday (plus some Saturdays and Bank Holiday Mondays) all the way through to Hallowe'en, including diesel and steam galas, a new family fun day, a beer festival, and much more.

**Colin Bowles LBNGR**

### Note in brief:

You may like to know that all the editions of "Eastern Star", right back to issue #1, may be found at

[www.nerht.org.uk/html/about\\_us/eastern\\_star.php](http://www.nerht.org.uk/html/about_us/eastern_star.php)

You may also like to know that most of the early editions of "Cuckoo", the newsletter of the the "Cuckoo" Steam Museum (former "Pereslavl Railway Museum") may be found at

[www.nerht.org.uk/html/countries/russia.php](http://www.nerht.org.uk/html/countries/russia.php)

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## **Tramway Save from Scrap ... ?**

This tramway (ex Düsseldorf and ex Nantes) is to be scrapped at the end of June if nobody wants it (located in Montereau - France near Provins).

Maybe this engine, said to be complete and able to run, should be of interest for a European friend ?

Please contact directly Jean-Paul LESCAT for more information [jean-paul.lescat@facs-patrimoine-ferroviaire.fr](mailto:jean-paul.lescat@facs-patrimoine-ferroviaire.fr)

**Phillipe Dupont**



**!!!**

**UPDATE Nr. 68 will be published in the end of June 2025**

**Deadline for text and photos is June 8th**

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