



# EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF MUSEUM & TOURIST RAILWAYS

Fédération Européenne des Chemins de Fer Touristiques et Historiques

Europäische Föderation der Museums- und Touristikbahnen

## UPDATE No 16 SEPTEMBER 2011

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

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*If you would like to receive your copy of Update in French or German, please let Keith Twyman know (contact details on page 9).*

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### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Since our AGM in Dresden, I am pleased to report that members of the Council have continued to be highly active in pursuit of FEDECRAIL's policies and strategies.

First the Polish Federation held a very successful Youth Camp on the narrow gauge line based at Novy Dwor near Gdansk. In addition to carrying out some restoration work on behalf of the Association and running the trains, the participants visited several historical sites including the UNESCO site, Malbork Castle, and the famous Gdansk shipyards and port.

In June FEDECRAIL Council met in Brussels to discuss, amongst other things, the formalisation of our links with the European Commission and, indeed, held a meeting in the offices of Brian Simpson MEP, the Chairman of the European Parliament's Transport and Tourism Committee. He was due to speak the following day at a seminar organised by the Council of Europe and, as President of FEDECRAIL, I have similarly been invited to speak at a conference organised by the European Commission on 27 September, European Tourism Day, which this year focuses on "Industrial Heritage: Differentiating the European Tourism Offer". I will be speaking in the afternoon on "Industrial Tourism: Local Development and Sustainable Policies". The real importance of this seminar, however, is the opportunity to meet various officials from the relevant directorates of the Commission as well as representatives of other interested parties. Obviously I shall take the opportunity of putting over the message that tourist railways introduce a major financial benefit to the regions they serve.

Before then, the Council will be meeting in southern Sweden to discuss next year's Conference, which will take place in May 2012. I hope that I will see as many of you as possible then.

**David T. Morgan, MBE, TD**  
President

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### **OPERATING AND SAFETY WORKING GROUP REPORT**

Hopefully, a detailed update on the work of the Group and future plans will appear in the next issue. New members are welcome and anyone with suitable experience is invited to contact David Woodhouse, Chairman of the Group.

We all hope that we are never involved in a railway accident, but when they do happen there is usually something that we can learn in order to improve safety and try to ensure that a similar event does not happen on “our railway”. Therefore, members may care to note that the UK Rail Standards and Safety Board (RSSB) publishes a useful “World Wide Summary” of railway accidents with links to the original reports. This is available on their website [www.rssb.co.uk](http://www.rssb.co.uk)

Members may also like to note that the UK Heritage Railway Association (HRA) has published a series of Guidance Notes on various aspects of the maintenance of steam locomotive boilers. These are available on the HRA website [www.heritagerailways.com](http://www.heritagerailways.com)

### **David Woodhouse**

Chairman, Safety and Operating Working Group

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## **TRAVELS OF A FEDECRAIL SECRETARY**

### **THE ROMANS IN RUMANIA**

It was time for me to prepare a tour with my second son, Julius, after his finishing school. We wanted to explore a country where we had never been. The choice was for Rumania and the small Republic of Moldova. I had warned him it would be a tiring round trip through a big country. On Monday 18 July Julius and I took the plane to Bucharest, where we met Daniel Secarescu, who supplied us with early- booked sleeper train tickets and lots of first hand railway heritage information. Next day, after a museum visit, Julius and I left the city at 16 40 by *Accelerat* train for the long journey to the North. Despite good sandwiches and a beer from our guard we slept little - first night on a sleeper train.... the night was hot.

Our arrival at Viseu de Jos was at 05 45. Our host took us to nearby Viseu de Sus where we found his pension, “Ancuta”, well located 200 metres from the station of the local Forestry Railway. Our Fedecrail member Verein Freunde der Wassertalbahn was active keeping steam traction alive. This was in use for ever-increasing number of tourists who wanted to explore the wilderness right next to the Ukrainian border.... Within two hours we sat at the station for more coffee. At 09 30 the little but heavily-loaded tourist steam train set off behind engine *Elvetia*. An extra train was ready to follow us after 30 minutes. Cars and buses had filled the parking area; the project was successful.

This slow trip was much worth the effort of going to the beautiful Maramures region. After having passed the shed with Ford Transits and other vans on rail wheels, lorries, some steam engines and blue coaches, we could see how flood damage of a few years ago had been repaired with EU money. Embankments were being well reinforced with concrete. A concrete lorry ran along the other embankment at 10 km/h due to the poor road quality, but the train must have been doing 12 km/h so we overtook slowly, much to Julius’s amusement, tired as he was. (Young men suffer much more from these trips than their pa). On the way we saw wooden houses with wooden roof tiles, typical of the region.

The line runs along the river Vaser, pronounced as the German “Wasser”. Indeed, there has been a German-speaking enclave out there for several centuries. At one of the two suspension bridges we saw boys waiting; one of them jumped on the running train and, hanging on to the outside, he travelled all the way to the terminus for free. We went into the wilderness where no-one lives and where there is no road, only a railroad. Logging was going on along a lesser-maintained track beyond Paltin, the terminus of our train. Here we found a grill and buffet under a wooden shelter - time enough for lunch. A mini railbus arrived. When we returned to Viseu de Sus we had been travelling by train for 20 out of 24 hours.

On Thursday, after a good sleep this time, we travelled in 10 train-hours to Sibiu, central Rumania, in four trains of *very* different quality. The first one, a slow train called *Personal*, took us along wonderful mountain scenery full of railway tunnels and high viaducts. It was really badly maintained and old, smelly. I broke on my knee a breakfast egg we had put into our lunch packs - so the white and the yolk spilled over my pants. I got agitated

and Julius roared with laughter! Then I threw our eggs or remains out of the window of a running train and, after a bite on a sweet, a tooth filling as well. That was the turning point for me: finally I could also laugh about the funny situation. In the evening from another *Personal* train we saw the high and steep Alpine mountains near Sibiu approaching. Sibiu or Hermannstadt is one of the seven Saxon towns in Rumania.

The ASTRA open air museum at Sibiu, which we visited on Friday, is very attractive and the traditional food really good and tempting, so by 9 p.m. we felt no need for supper at all..... Sadly, the Sibiu tram ran only at 7 a.m. due to the poor track; we missed that one.

Julius was not interested next day, Saturday, so I alone went to the narrow gauge railway depot with Mihai Blotor, the Chairman of the Friends of Mocanita (Little Train) Association, and to the vintage locomotive display at the CFR standard gauge depot. Mihai hoped to restore the whole of the Sibiu to Agnita narrow gauge line, which was rescued with the help of NERHT and a Resolution made by Fedecrail. However, while the line has a length of 60 km, most of the volunteers live at Sibiu, so the local support is right at the other end of the line. It is not easy, but good work is being done by the volunteers, who have restored a goods shed and will place it along the line as their vehicle shed. The Association wants to become a Fedecrail member. There is a group, SAR UK, which offers help to the project.

Then after a good lunch in the fascinating old fortified Saxon town, we took the 14 35 train to Bucharest, where we arrived after just 7 comfortable train hours. It was getting easy by now.....

Julius had been on WiFi free internet to all our overnight addresses and he decided on Sunday that, as we had time in Bucharest, we should see *Harry Potter* in IMAX 3D. The most impressive AFI Palace complex with its shops, 24 cinemas, restaurants and skating rink appeared to have been designed amongst others by architect Gheorghe Stanculescu, whom we met in the late afternoon in our hotel with his friend Ion Sturdza. Stephen Wiggs, who knew Gheorghe well and had asked him to pre-book 1<sup>st</sup> Class sleeper train tickets, was going to join us on the Prietenia or Friendship Express from Rumania to Chisinau, the capital town of the young Republic of Moldova, which was created in 1991 after the fall of Communism in Russia. As you may know, it is the poorest country of Europe and little visited by tourists, even though the rolling scenery is nice, the food excellent and the wines of world class (*and* the Chisinau Blonde beer, as I had explained to Julius, who was much interested to taste it).

At 19 00 we were in a first class coach compartment with plastic flowers on the little table where we parked our drinks and baguettes. The Carpathians disappeared behind us in the late evening sunlight. This time we slept very well until 04 50. Some TV series are named, for example *India on four wheels*; well, I had failed to count the number of wheels and, even worse, at the border station of Ungheni we were jacked up and the bogies rolled away for Russian gauge ones! From 6 we slept very well again; Julius had to be pushed just in time before Chisinau station at 08 30. This splendid station is the cleanest I have ever seen; it is a well restored and maintained beautifully. We crossed the road to Hotel Cosmos, where we had booked our air conditioned room, and took a short rest.

## **FEDECRAIL AND NERHT VISIT TO CHISINAU, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

On that same Monday, 25 July 2011, at 15 00 Stephen Wiggs, Chairman of the New Europe Railway Heritage Trust (NERHT) and I visited Director Mr. Serghei TOMSA of the Moldovan Railways in his office, where we also met his Railway Museum Director Mr Aleksej SEMONOV. We came together with a lady interpreter, Ksenya Grigoripva, hired by NERHT. The visit had kindly been arranged by the Italian Ambassador Mr. Stefano de Leo, who is a colleague of Ambassador Mr. Stefano Benazzo whom we met last October in Sofia.

At the start I praised the Moldovan Railways for their brave if not heroic activities in improving the railways by constructing a new line to the river Danube, upgrading a line to EU standards and building a short cut near the airport. Both I myself and Stephen then explained the roles of our organisations, and our good cooperation. Our visit was aimed to establish a contact with someone interested in Moldovan railway heritage. We hardly knew any details about Moldova but we were happy to make contact, extend our network, and see whether any assistance could be given when needed. Fedecrail was open to all the European countries, whether EU members or not. Our Cultural *Riga Charters* and Fedecrail brochures were handed out by me, and a NERHT leaflet in Rumanian by Stephen Wiggs.

To our happy surprise, Mr. Tomsa informed us that there was already a railway museum in Bender and that plans

were being implemented to create a railway museum in Chisinau, in the Cultural Palace of the Railway Workers just by the station. 2011 was the year when 140 years of Moldovan Railways would be celebrated, on Sunday 7 August. Mr. Semonov was very busy preparing an exhibition in the building. Guests from neighbouring countries Rumania and the Ukraine had been invited. He asked whether FEDECRAIL would accept an invitation to the annual railway "birthday celebration" next year on the first Sunday of August. I confirmed twice, much to his satisfaction.

Mr. Semonov told us enthusiastically that the museum at Bender had open worked cabs of both a steam and a diesel locomotive in which guests could take place behind the controls, and there were five historic coaches including the very first coach built since the Russian revolution, a Type 20 (20 tons) coach.

After a while Mr. Tomsa recommended that any further questions could be discussed with Mr. Semonov, whom we followed into his office. This did not take long, but we enjoyed much appreciation for our visit to Chisinau, and sincere enthusiasm. We understood that every railway junction in Moldova had an old steam engine on display, but the exact number of historic vehicles in the country was unknown. We also learned that the contacts between his museum and the outer world were more or less limited to the Ukraine, mainly - because of the archives - Odessa.

A happy coincidence was that the day before we had met Mr. Gheorghe Stanculescu in our hotel in Bucharest. He is an architect who has successfully arranged an exhibition about the good role of British engineering in Moldovan railway construction in the 1870s. The lovely brochure of that exhibition was in my hands and I gave it to Mr. Semonov, saying that Mr. Stanculescu could undoubtedly help in finding material about Rumanian railway engineering in the Bucharest archives: we would send contact details after our return home. I also added that this was an example of how quickly networking can start within Fedecrail. Mr. Semonov was moved by our unexpected support.

Next morning Stephen left on the 06 40 flight. I was expected at noon in the office of Ambassador de Leo for evaluation. He was happy to have my report and said that the visit had been very good because not many people take an interest in this small and impoverished country and the population can very much appreciate a positive sign from the West. In my view we had done right by not speaking about the breakaway province of Transnistria and its rebellious government, but I was assured there was not a taboo on this in Moldova. The lunch was on the Ambassador, good Italian food for the two of us. We tried to buy a few postcards but saw no kiosk offering them. Tourism is not a big business over there.

Another night at Chisinau with its lovely food, wine and beer kept us happy (remember, this was a holiday visit!), but next morning we had a flight delay at 06 40 and in the evening the flight was cancelled altogether. Julius was at the end of his nerves that day..... Next morning we woke up at 03 00, once again in a hotel on the airway company. We had been re-routed to fly all the way over Moldova and Rumania into Budapest in Hungary and then back over the Rumanian Carpathian mountains in a blue morning haze to Bucharest, where we arrived at 11 00 the same morning. Here KLM told us that we had to pay a penalty and that we could fly next day at 06 00. I told Julius that I refused to wake up at three o'clock for a third time, so we started shopping for cheap singles. Lufthansa 800, Austrian 400..... In the end we found an internet ticketing office which had a good deal: Swiss went to Zürich at 14 30 and connected with Amsterdam for just €208. In the meantime the home front was getting a bit worried: we didn't know where we would be and when. We texted, 'We're going to the Klotten' (Zürich Airport), which means in Dutch something like going to hell or disappearing forever. All were happy when we arrived at Hengelo NS station after 1,800 train-kilometres in ten days and 6,700 by air, thanks to the re-routing. 'Now I'm an experienced traveller,' commented Julius with a broad smile. Poor boy, his interest in railways is minimal, yet he did it so well. We needed a few days for recovery, but it was absolutely worth the effort!

After our return home I went to my computer and asked some Russian-speaking Fedecrail members (Moldova is 50/50 Russian- and Rumanian-speaking) to send their congratulations to the celebrating Railways of Moldova. Two of them did, for which I am most grateful. Mr. Tomsa also received my congratulations for the 140 years of Moldovan Railways and Mr. Semonov received the address details of Mr. Stanculescu. I hope they can work together, and also that we may hear more from the Moldovans, now that we have met personally.

**Livius J. Kooy**

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## YOUTH CAMP 2011

### AN ACCOUNT BY ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF HIS EXPERIENCES AT THE CAMP

In July I had the opportunity to attend the FEDEC Rail Youth Camp again; this year it was held in Poland.....

I would be travelling out by rail, and the other English participant (from the Keithley and Worth Valley Railway) had arranged to travel out with me. On Wednesday evening Mr Brown, with his rather large Hungarian suitcase, was bundled into the back of the Land Rover at Whitstable station. We turned in at a reasonable time, ready to get up rather early to get to Ebbsfleet in the morning.

We arrived at Ebbsfleet in good time on Thursday morning. After successfully negotiating the check in and security (I remembered to remove my steel toe-capped boots this time!) we had an exciting wait before boarding the 06 36 Bruxelles service, which arrived on time. The Eurostar was quite busy and, after squeezing Mr Brown's Hungarian suitcase into the luggage rack and finding our seats, we decided to move down to the buffet car for a cup of tea. Just before Lille we moved back to our seats, when I took the opportunity to read through our connections. We had a 45 minute connection at Bruxelles, which should be plenty of time as we were running on time. Mr Brown decided to occupy one of the tip up seats in the vestibule for the rest of the journey as the young lady in the seat next to him had decided to have a sleep, lying across both seats.

Alighting at Bruxelles Midi we trundled down the platform with our suitcases, and made our way to the lower concourse. Looking at the departures screen we noticed there was no platform or departure time next to ICE 15 (our train). Fortunately, the lady in the information kiosk, who noticed us looking, told us that the train was now starting in Liège. She then said we should hurry, because the SNCB service that would get us there in time to pick up our ICE was leaving now! A rapid ascent of the slope up to the platform was required, and we got onto the train just before it departed. We checked with the SNCB conductor that we could pick up our train at Liège, and then found some seats. The SNCB train wasn't very busy and there was plenty of room for Mr Brown's Hungarian suitcase. Having a look at our connections, we concluded that as long as the ICE service to Frankfurt wasn't delayed too much more we would be able to make our connection.

On arrival at Liège-Guillemins, we trundled down the platform and up the escalators to have a look at the screens and identify which platform we needed for our ICE service. We then made our way down to the platform, only for it to be changed. So we moved to the other platform and our train arrived. We found our seats and then settled down for the journey to Frankfurt. Unfortunately, the set developed more technical problems (which was the reason the train had started in Liège instead of Bruxelles) and we arrived into platform 18 at Frankfurt Hbf about 40 minutes late.

Our next connection, ICE 598 to Berlin Ostbahnhof, was due to depart from platform 9 in just 2 minutes. A rather rapid exit was required, and we whizzed down to the platform with our suitcases. We were certainly being well exercised. We got to the platform just as our train was pulling in. Then we found our seats and successfully "placed" Mr Brown's large suitcase in the overhead luggage rack without flattening anyone in the process. Unfortunately the air conditioning in our carriage was not working, but the friendly young DB conductor gave us some free water. She told us that we could move down to another carriage if we wanted to, but the train was quite busy and we decided to stay where we were. A visit to the buffet car was required; Mr Brown found himself some Pepsi whilst I enjoyed a rather nice cheese and tomato sandwich. We arrived into Berlin Ostbahnhof more or less on time at about 19 07. I had booked to stay in the Intercity Hotel at Ostbahnhof that night, and Andrew had also decided to stay there. We made our way to the hotel where I checked in. Unfortunately, Mr Brown had managed to book himself into the wrong hotel so, after I had put my luggage in the room, we went to back to the station. After having a quick grease burger and chips, we found Mr Brown's platform and he then made his way to Berlin Zoologischer Garten.

I was up at a reasonable time of Friday, and Andrew met me at Ostbahnhof. After he had made a reservation at the Intercity Hotel for the return journey, we made our way to the platform. Our train, the 08 10 RE to Szczecin Główny, arrived on time and we got on and found a seat. The train was very busy, but we had room for our luggage and everyone was friendly.

Shortly after alighting at Szczecin our TLK arrived. The train was absolutely packed and some of the

compartments were locked out of use, so we had to perch on our suitcases at the end of the carriage most of the way to Gdansk Glowny. We left Szczecin more or less on time but in the end our train arrived at Gdansk Glowny about 30 minutes late. We made our way through the subway to the main entrance. After a quick 'phone call we were picked up in about 10 minutes.

We would be staying in Nowy Dwór Gdanski, the headquarters of the Zulawska Narrow Gauge Railway. After having something to eat, we spent the rest of the evening talking to the other participants who had arrived already, and turned in rather late.

Like last year, there was a good selection of people attending the Camp. There were two chaps from Serbia, four Hungarians from the Children's Railway in Budapest - where we stayed last year - three chaps from Sweden, two Austrians, one German, two Ukrainian girls, the chap from the Worth Valley and me, and the three Polish chaps who were organising things.

I was up on early as usual, and went for a walk before breakfast. The rest of the participants had arrived during the night and we all had breakfast at 08 15. After breakfast we walked down the road to the station, where we had a look around the sheds. The railway has its main depot at Nowy Dwór Gdanski. There were a couple of Lxd2s and a railcar in the shed; the railway's Px48 was out with a train at the time. After looking around the sheds and having a closer look at one of the Lxd2s, we made our way to the standard gauge platform. We then travelled to Malbork on the Arriva service. This service runs in the summer only, and the line is quite overgrown. After trundling along for a while we eventually arrived at Malbork. Here we had a three-hour walking tour around the castle. It is the largest surviving castle in Poland and is listed by UNESCO. The castle was badly damaged at the end of the war, but has since been restored and rebuilt. After our tour we walked back to the station to get on the Arriva service back to Nowy Dwór Gdanski. The narrow gauge trackwork and platforms can still be seen adjacent to the standard gauge station; you can see where the narrow gauge used to continue and cross the river and also where the triangle used to be. Quite a lot of the track between Nowy Dwór Gdanski and Malbork is still in place. After a short wait we got the train back to Nowy Dwór Gdanski.

After breakfast on Sunday, an Ikarus bendy bus picked us up from outside the accommodation. After a rather noisy but interesting journey we were dropped off across the road from the railway station in Gdansk. After taking a few photographs we walked down to Solidarity Museum where we had a look at the various exhibits. After that we had walking tour around Gdansk, mainly the old town. This was quite pleasant, and after getting rid of our tour guide we made our way to a bar for something to eat. After a nice meal we had a bit of free time, and everyone decided to have a look round. I went with the two Austrians, Mr Brown and the two Ukrainian girls. After having a look around the market stalls and searching for one of the Ukrainians who we "lost" in amongst all of the people, we met back at the bar. Then we all walked back towards the station and waited for the Ikarus to pick us up. The bus dropped us back at the accommodation in Nowy Dwór Gdanski.

On Monday, we spent the day working on a couple of semaphore signals in the yard at Nowy Dwór Gdanski. The signals were going to be installed along the line to control the passage of trains across the railway's swing bridge. At about 16 30 we cleared up and made our way back up the road to the accommodation, stopping off at Lidl for essential supplies on the way. It was decided that we would have a barbecue later on that evening. I risked one or two of the sausages cremated by Mr Brown, and spent the rest of the evening talking to one of the Ukrainian girls. After a very nice evening I turned in rather late.

I was up at 06 00 on Tuesday morning, followed shortly by one of the Austrians; and eventually, after much groaning and mumbling, Mr Brown emerged. We then walked down to the depot with Maurycy to prepare the steam loco. The diesel driver was nowhere to be seen, so there was some delay in pulling the loco out of the shed. Eventually the diesel driver appeared, only to hurry off again to drive a railcar. In the end Maurycy and the fireman started the up the diesel and pulled the Px48 out of the shed. Maurycy explained that the smokebox and tubes would have to be cleaned and the remains of the fire pushed through the grate. I was glad the Austrian and Mr Brown were quick to volunteer to do the smokebox, which left me with the cleaner task of raking the fire through. Rather than throwing the remains of the fire out with a clinker shovel, some of the firebars were removed, allowing it to be raked back and dropped into the ashpan. When I had finished raking the fire through, Maurycy replaced the firebars and I gathered wood from the store for lighting up. Mr Brown and the Austrian had just about finished clearing out the smokebox and brushing the tubes. The screens were brushed down and replaced and then the fire was lit up. We then set about cleaning the loco. All of the cleaning was finished by about 09 15. Mr Brown and I then climbed up into the tender and threw the coal forward. By this time the driver had arrived and did his oiling up, and the fireman had started to make up the fire. When we had finished I

decided to have breakfast and take a few photographs. We then wandered over to the sidings to have a look at our train. Maurycy oiled a few things up, whilst we helped the guard to persuade one of the sliding doors open with a sledge hammer. The loco came off shed and then shunted the wagons to the platform. The others had arrived at about 09 30 and had been painting the signals. Whilst they were clearing up we went and had a rather rapid shower before making our way over to the train.

The special train (with the Px48 and two heritage wagons) then took us to the swing bridge, stopping for a photograph on the way. Everyone had the opportunity to travel on the footplate for part of the journey. We stopped on the approach to the bridge, and we all hopped off and walked along to the bridge. I understand that the swing bridge is the last surviving narrow gauge railway swing bridge in Europe. The bridge was built in the 1890s and is turned by hand. After about half an hour the bridge was positioned for the train to cross and we all walked across so that we could take a photograph of the train crossing from the other side. After picking us up the train then continued to Sztutowo Muzeum. We had a tour around Stutthof concentration camp and then walked back to the station, where our special train was waiting for us. The train then took us to Stegna Gdanska, and I had another ride on the footplate on the way. Shortly after we alighted from the train, a man in a van arrived with our lunch. After lunch we walked down to the beach and spent about an hour and a half there before walking back to the station. We got the 17 30 back to Nowy Dwór Gdanski, arriving at 18 10. This gave us the opportunity to travel in one of the railway's railcars, which didn't give a very smooth ride. Back at the accommodation, we packed our bags for the transfer to Koszalin the next day and spent the rest of the evening chatting.

I was up early on Wednesday as usual. Eventually everyone else emerged, and we had breakfast at about 08 15. After breakfast we wandered down to the depot (taking our suitcases and travelling things with us) and worked on the signals for the rest of the morning. In the afternoon we would be leaving Nowy Dwór Gdanski and moving to Koszalin, where we would be staying overnight. At about 14 00 we cleared up and made our way to the bus waiting for us at the front of the station.

The coach company that was meant to be taking us to Koszalin (then on to Bialosliwia and back to Nowy Dwór Gdanski) had pulled out at the last minute, so we would be travelling on the Ikarus bendy bus that had taken us to Gdansk on Sunday. We loaded the suitcases on to the back of the bus and set off for Koszalin. It was a fairly long journey, especially when you're on an Ikarus, taking about 6 hours. The bus is only normally used for journeys around the city in Gdansk, but it seemed to be alright. The bus driver enjoyed playing his "teckno" music very loud on the way, which I don't think everyone appreciated (especially the Ukrainian girls, who were trying to have a sleep). We arrived at the accommodation at Koszalin at about 20 00. After having dinner we all got back on the bus, which took us the narrow gauge depot – stopping off at Tesco for "essential supplies" on the way. We had a quick nocturnal tour of the depot and then took some chairs and sat around a fire whilst one of the railway members told us a bit about the line. We spent the rest of the night sitting talking, and returned to the accommodation at about 00 30.

We were up at a reasonable time on Thursday, and after breakfast the Ikarus dropped us off at the narrow gauge depot. An Lxd2 was sitting in the "platform" at the head of the railway's renewals train. We all made ourselves comfortable(?) in the rear carriage and the train set off towards Manowo. After about 45 minutes we arrived into Manowo and the loco ran round the train. We all disappeared to the local shop to buy some bottled water. The loco propelled the train a few hundred yards out beyond the station, where we would be replacing some sleepers. My track induction course now had some use. We worked in groups of four per sleeper. The sleepers were changed in the standard way: first the adjacent beds were dug out, and then a trench in the cress, and the ballast was then removed from under the sleeper. The chair screws were removed, allowing the sleeper to drop down and then be slid into the trench in the cress. A new sleeper was then put in and the ballast packed under. Finally the adjacent beds were filled back up. After replacing a couple of sleepers with the German chap and one of the Hungarians, I went to help the other Hungarians. The local television people appeared and filmed us working, as well as interviewing a few people – I managed to escape. At about 14 00 we had a break for lunch, when we all walked to the café down the road from the station. After a pleasant lunch the train took us back to Koszalin.

The Ikarus then took us to Bialosliwie, where we would be staying. We arrived quite late in the evening and had dinner, which was very nice. After that we found our rooms and had a wash. There was a knock on our door; it was one of the Ukrainian girls. She had come to let us know that it was her birthday and that she was going to buy everyone a drink and have a party. Nearly everyone came down to the beer garden; "Happy Birthday" was

then sung in about four different languages. We were all pretty tired after replacing sleepers all day, but everyone had a good time. Most people (including me) ended up dancing, and after a really nice evening we all turned in rather late.

I was up at a reasonable time on Friday. After breakfast the Ikarus took us to the Interlok workshops at Pila and we were shown around by one of the managers. After being shown around the workshops we had a bit of free time to take some photographs. I decided to wander off to the sidings next to the sheds, and most other people followed. After spending a bit of time wandering around and looking at the old roundhouse adjacent to the Interlock sheds, we headed back to Bialosliwie.

We walked a short distance from our accommodation to the depot of the Wyrzysk District Railway, adjacent to the mainline. The line was part of a large 600mm gauge network, and the society is gradually restoring further lengths of the line. A train, consisting of two wagons hauled by one of the railway's diesel locomotives, was arranged especially for us. It was a bit of a squeeze to get everyone into the two wagons, and there were no real windows in the wagons so I didn't get to see much of the line on the way. But still I had a pleasant, even if a little uncomfortable, journey talking to one of the Ukrainian girls. After about an hour we reached our destination. We were all glad to stretch our legs, and after taking a couple of photographs of the "station" we headed for the small shop. After getting some essential supplies, we squeezed back into the wagons and the train took us back to Bialosliwie – stopping for a group photograph on top of a large haystack on the way! After having something to eat at the guesthouse, we walked back to the depot to have a good look around. The railway has several diesel locomotives, some very nicely restored carriages and many wagons in un-restored condition. We all got to drive a couple of the diesel locomotives up and down the yard, and a few people took the pump trolley up and down the sidings a few times – much to the amusement of the passengers on the passing mainline trains. It started to rain and we got quite wet before heading back to the accommodation at about 20 30.

We had breakfast early on Saturday morning and left at about 08 30. It was a long journey back to Nowy Dwór Gdanski on the Ikarus, taking about six hours. On arrival back at the accommodation, we had a group photograph next to the Ikarus and then made our way back to our rooms. Previously we had been the only people staying at the place but, much to our surprise, a large Polish wedding party were now staying there as well. This caused some confusion as to which showers were male and female, as it appeared they had been told differently from us. The wedding party left quite early, and we had a few hours spare time before our farewell evening. I wandered down to Lidl with Mr Brown, in search of some shoe polish. Eventually everyone emerged ready to set off at the planned time. We all walked down to the town and headed for the Museum. After having some champagne, we were shown around by the head of the Museum and then we had something to eat. Along with Eszter from Hungary, I was then nabbed to be interviewed by the Polish television people, after which there was a presentation of our certificates and a group photograph. The Ukrainian girls then went for a walk around the town with their English teacher, some people went back to the accommodation, and the Hungarians, two of the Swedish chaps, and Mr Brown and I had a short look around the town with one of the Polish chaps and Sten Erson-Wester. They continued onto the station to have a drink with some of the people from the Zulawska Narrow Gauge railway, and I walked back to the accommodation with the Hungarians.

I was up fairly early on Sunday morning. After having breakfast and saying goodbye to everyone, Andrew, Christian from Germany and I were driven into Gdansk. It was an interesting, rather noisy journey; we went in Maurycy's Polski Fiat 125. We parked outside his flat and walked to Gdansk Glowny. We then got on the 09 14 TLK to Szczecin. It was a pleasant journey. We could actually sit down, and in declassified first class, and there was plenty of room for Mr Brown's suitcase. The timetable had been revised (due to engineering works somewhere, I think) which meant our fifteen minute connection at Szczecin Glowny turned into a five minute connection. The train was running eight minutes late by the time we got to Szczecin, but luckily the Eurocity service to Berlin had been held to maintain the connection. After dashing across the platform and into the train we found our compartment and made ourselves comfortable. Christian left us at Angermünde, and we arrived into Berlin Hbf at about 16 45. We then decided to hop in a taxi to the Intercity Hotel at Ostbahnhof.

After a comfortable night's stay, we had breakfast at about 07 00 and made our way into the station for the 08 40 ICE 597 to Frankfurt Hbf. We arrived at Frankfurt on time and had time to get something to eat before moving down the platform to get on the ICE 14 to Bruxelles Midi. We arrived on time at 17 35 and made our way to the Eurostar check in. After getting through security to the waiting area, we had a short wait before we boarded ES 9157. The Eurostar wasn't too busy, although quite a few people got on at Lille. I alighted at Ebbsfleet at 19 45 and Mr Brown stayed on the train to St Pancras and then got on an East Coast service to

Leeds.

I had a really good time on the camp in Poland, and once again made some nice friends. We saw some fascinating narrow gauge railways and visited some interesting places. Like last year, I thoroughly enjoyed the whole week and we managed to do a lot in quite a short space of time.

**Joel Pearse**

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## **HERITAGE RAILWAYS IN JORDAN, INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES**

The Hijaz Railway was built in the days of the Ottoman Empire. The 1050 mm gauge line from Damascus to Medina, 1308 km long, was opened in 1908. Currently freight services carrying phosphoric ore are operated in southern Jordan, but steam-hauled charter trains and tourist trains run in northern Jordan and Syria. On this visit I attended a couple of workshops and rode on a tourist train.

The first workshop was organised by His Excellency Eng. Abdel Rahim Al Boucai, a member of the Jordanian Parliament who has been making great efforts to conserve and study the Jordan Hijaz Railway. Brilliant presentations were made by five speakers: the General Director of the Jordan Hijaz Railway and the Aqaba Railway (the southern part of the Hijaz Railway); and Conservation, Science and Architecture Professors at Hashemite University.

The second workshop was held at the German Jordanian University, where there were more very good presentations, in particular one about the heritage buildings of the Hijaz Railway. Throughout these presentations and the following active discussions, I was impressed by the interest shown in the Hijaz Railway, which was clearly being studied in depth. We were then invited by Exc. Boucai to a superb Jordanian cuisine lunch.

On the third day, a Friday, which is a holiday in the Islamic world, I rode on the tourist train from Ammam to Jiza, 37 km south. At Ammam station there is a small museum, and also a loco shed where seven steam engines are based. These are used to haul the charter trains which operate several times a month. The tourist train, hauled by a GE diesel loco, runs every Friday during the season. Travelling by train is quite an unusual experience for Jordanians, and the operation seemed to be very successful.

Unfortunately, I could not include Syria in this visit because of the unrest in that country, but I am hoping to join the next visit, 'Inch Allah', in 2012 or 2013.

Indonesia has two railway museums which run steam trains. One is on Sumatra Island, and the other operates over two lines on Java Island. These are controlled by the Heritage and Conservation Department of PT. Kereta Api, the Indonesian Railway Company. There are also some sugar mill lines and a forest railway which occasionally run steam charter trains.

In Jakarta I talked with Ms Ella Ubaidi, Executive Vice President of PT. Kereta Api Heritage and Conservation Department. She outlined the current situation and explained the plans for the development of their museums and heritage railway sites in co-operation with the very popular Buddhist monument in Borobudur. The plans are impressive and, with increased activity, more steam engines and staff will be required.

The next few days were spent riding on trains and visiting museums in Ambarawa. On the first day we took a train to Semarang, where a magnificent Lawang Sewu building, once the headquarters of the Indonesian Railways, is currently under restoration. This is the finest building that I have ever seen.

The next day we were taken by car to Tuntang station, one section north of Ambarawa. A small diesel train called *Rolley* runs between these two stations along a line with pretty lakeside views; it was full of local families, even on a weekday morning. Steam charter trains run on the two sections, one a rack section, south of Ambarawa on 20 to 25 days a month – it is almost a scheduled service! Two German, Esslingen-built, wood-burning steam engines and a diesel are in traffic, and various static steam engines are on display. Our special train to Jambu was steam-hauled. On the journey we enjoyed tasty durian fruit, and many of the friendly locals on the lineside waved as we passed. At Jambu, the locomotive was shunted round the train and propelled our coach up the rack section to the next station, Bedono, 710 m above sea level; the line offered very scenic tropical views. On our return a local child demonstrated another way to use the rack rail. I should like to thank Ms Ella Ubaidi

and her staff, who provided guides, the special steam train, and all transport and meals.

The Railways and Industrial Heritage Society of the Philippines (RIHSPI), the national organisation, was established just three years ago. In that short time a couple of American-built heritage railcars and a signal box have been restored, and work is about to start on a new project, the first railway museum in the Philippines.

Following a meeting with Mr Karel Brouwers, RIHSPI President, in Manila, I had an opportunity to visit their sites. One item, Philippines National Railways (PNR) Buda railcar no. 22, was beautifully restored in 2009 and was on display at Tutuban, PNR's terminus in Manila. Railcar no. 21 is in the workshop, and the plan is that after restoration this will be used as a heritage inspection car. Another item under restoration is the signal box at Abad Santos, built in 1905 and on the oldest section of line still in use in the Philippines. The building is still lived in, as are a group of elderly coaches at Tutuban station; apparently, this is not unusual. We then moved to the site of the planned museum, alongside PNR's Caloocan workshop. The abandoned station building and yard, in use until 2002, covered a large area apparently adequate for a museum. Mr Brouwers explained the plans for the development of the museum, and I look forward to its inauguration with great interest. The final visit was to the Meralco Museum, opened by the Manila Electric Company, formerly the Manila Electric Railroad and Light Company, which operated the tram system in Manila until World War II. The exhibits include a tram car; some of the advertisements inside this vehicle were in Spanish. All this activity suggests that RIHSPI and PNR work well together.

Recruiting youngsters is a common problem for heritage railways in Europe, North America, Oceania and Japan, but many members of RIHSPI are in their enthusiastic 20s – it seems that they have a bright future.

**Kyoichi Oda**

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#### **FIRST MEETING OF APHTRO : 8-10 JUNE 2012**

The Oceania-Asia organisation APHTRO (Asia Pacific Heritage and Tourist Rail Organisation) is planning its first meeting, which is to be held in Indonesia. Everyone with an interest in heritage railways and museums will be warmly welcomed. This will be a good opportunity to enjoy the magnificent heritage railways of Indonesia and to learn about the heritage railways of Asia. The meeting is to be held in Solo (also known as Surakarta), in the Central Province of Java. There will be a one-day session with presentations from the organisation's founding members and, hopefully, guest speakers from WATTRAIN and FEDECRAIL. This will be followed by a two-day visit to Ambarawa and Tasikmadu, including a steam-hauled trip.

Please ask Kyoichi Oda – [prairie@kun.ne.jp](mailto:prairie@kun.ne.jp) – for more details.

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*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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