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Fédération Européenne des Chemins de Fer Touristiques et Historiques

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To the members of FEDECRAIL,

The year 2020 has given us an ever unseen kaleidoscope of wanted but foremost unwanted developments. The first thoughts about this will bring CORONA upwards, with BREXIT as a good second element. Perhaps less spectacular, the FEDECRAIL year started with the general meeting with the members on January 11th in Leuven, who adopted the revised constitution, as a first step to reform FEDECRAIL as a more member orientated organization.

CORONA came from China, but had a great influence on our lives, privately and rail- and tramway-like. It started in Europe from Italy and conquered rapidly the whole of Europe. Every country tried to make the best of it, but most of our members and their adherents were forced to close down from the beginning of April. In some countries reopening could be seen from June on, but a second wave urged in many countries to a second lockdown as now is the case again in many countries during Christmas until somewhere in the New Year .

The board of FEDECRAIL decided to continue the work, but instead to attend all forms of meetings physically, our world changed into a world of web-meetings. We went over to a first board web meeting in March to decide to postpone the Bilbao AGM meeting and full programme to a later moment. But later on it became clear that travel restrictions made organizing programmes like that were not longer possible. Being a Belgium organization, the Flemish government decided that there would be more time for an AGM, so we organized that part of the AGM 2020 that was necessary fulfilling the tasks implied in the Belgium law on September 5th in Rotterdam, because at that moment the Netherlands was still a country where you could travel to. The second part of the 2020 AGM will be executed at the same date as the AGM 2021. (Form, place and date still to be decided).

In the 2021 AGM the board could propose a revised budget as a result of CORONA, hardly any traveling and organisational costs. So we proposed to the members and they accepted, to pay a membership fee over 2020, of about 50 % compared with 2019, as a good help in reduce the members costs in CORONA time as well.

At this moment of writing to you, we have no idea in what way BREXIT, the transitional period ends on December 31st , so in a few day time, will start, as there is no agreement now between the EU and the UK. For our Foundation, our British colleagues united in the HRA, decided as a part of a complete managerial reorganization to make the British Heritage Rail sector fit for the future in which BREXIT as a reality plays of course a role. As part of this process HRA decided, that without the strong EU connection after January 1st 2021, a full HRA membership of FEDECRAIL was not longer valuable. The board of HRA informed us about this decision of termination of membership per 2021 by a written letter to give notice before the constitutional date for such message of October 1st 2020.



For the board these BREXIT and CORONA occurrences are the reason to think about a new structure of financing FEDECRAIL, but also about the acting of our FEDERATION, her board, team-members and role of the members and their adherents in the years from 2021 on.

To discuss this we will invite the members to a web-meeting, after the two planned council web-meetings in the beginning of January 2021. The board will provide the members with proposals as discussion papers, to be discussed during this members web-meeting. It should help us to produce mature proposals for adoption in the 2021 AGM.

I want to thank all people involved in the world of rail- and tramway preservation for all the work done. This year under very often amazing difficult circumstances. And I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy Corona-less 2021.

Jaap Nieweg, President of FEDECRAIL.

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