

Wattrain

The World Alliance of
Tourist Trams & Trains

Website: www.wattrain.net

In Association with UIC-The Worldwide Railway Organization.



May 2018 Newsletter

Editorial:

The WATTRAIN goals..”to help, foresee, react, invent, define and be a factor of balance on a worldwide scale” (a message contained in the footer to each newsletter page as a reminder!) is evidenced by features in this month’s newsletter.

”How to address the challenges of tomorrow using the resources we have today” is the overall theme for WATTRAIN’s triannual conference in Frisco, Texas at the end of October 2018, with key experts engaged to present material that will be of benefit to the worldwide WATTRAIN family.

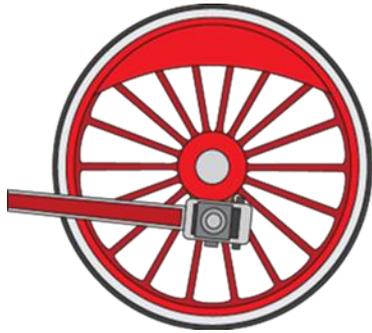
Just recently the UIC(International Union of Railways)..and with whom WATTRAIN has a Memorandum of Understanding(MoU).. held its first TopRail Forum on Tourism Opportunities for Railways in Barcelona.

During the Forum, FS Italiane proposed developments of railway tourism through soft mobility and sustainable itineraries by train.... And will host the TopRail Forum next year.

Included in this edition are news items from the US Old Town Sacramento Relives Rail & River History: Funds Sought to Rehab Railroad Roundhouse as Museum: Port Huron Museum will restore 140-year-old steam locomotive and an item on National Travel and Tourism Week, Train Day May 6-12

In AUSTRALIA Technology steps into the driver's seat to tell heritage stories at Ballarat Heritage Weekend on May 26-27. In the UK , a community rail project involving the Trawsfynydd Railway Company, which aims to restore community and heritage railway services to railway between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd has hit the buffers... and in Taiwan, Taiwan Railways Administration (TRA) and the Shinano Railway Co., Ltd announces ticket exchange program with Japanese railway to boost tourism.

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SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE!

WATTRAIN World Alliance of Tourist Trams & Trains

Will hold its triannual Conference at the Drury Inn in Frisco, Texas, from **October 31 to November 4, 2018.**

"How to address the challenges of tomorrow using the resources we have today"

We strongly hope to see you there!!!!

Registration: Details to be confirmed.

Deadline for registration for Conference: September 30, 2018

Topics: Staffing (recruitment & Training), Environment (incl. safeguarding future use of traditional fuels), litigation, protection of historic collections, and insurance."

Speakers (tentative list): in addition to Wattrain speakers, renowned experts in their fields, including: Steve Ryan, Sergio Rodriguez Zubieta, William Brotherton, Tripp Salisbury, Gabriel Asenjo, Courtney Wilson, G. Mark Ray (HRA President); Jeff Johnson ("Rail Events")

Venue: Wattrain has blocked a number of rooms at special rates at the Drury Inn & Suites Frisco, TX. To reserve: www.druryhotels.com and enter Group Number 2340496. The deadline for hotel registration is October 9, 2018.

Further info and program: see www.wattrain.net

"Wattrain goals: help, foresee, react, invent, define and be a factor of balance on a worldwide scale"

UIC: 1st UIC Forum on Tourism Opportunities for Railways successfully held on 20 April 2018 in Barcelona.

The 1st UIC TopRail Forum (WATTRAIN has an MoU with UIC), jointly organised by UIC (International Union of Railways) and FGC (Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya) under the theme “The Business of Rail Tourism”, was held at the Fira de Barcelona congress centre as part of the B-Travel Trade Fair.

The TopRail project is an initiative of the International Union of Railways (UIC) dedicated to Rail Tourism at international level. Its primary objective is to bring together rail and tourist-related stakeholders – from the railway industry (operators, manufacturers) and the tourism industry (tour operators, wholesalers) to international, national and regional policy makers, international organisations and academia, to the final customer – to discuss the business opportunities in the rail and tourism sectors. Which is why WATTRAIN is involved.



The Forum was created with the aim of establishing itself as the ultimate benchmark for sector professionals and is intended to be the meeting point of all the stakeholders involved. The approach is very broad encompassing different areas: train-cruises, panoramic trains, railway heritage, etc.

This first edition, attended by around 60 participants from 15 different countries (from Ecuador to USA and Russia to most of the countries in Europe), consisted of single intense day of morning and afternoon sessions, complemented by a technical visit on the following day to the new Railway Museum of Catalonia in Vilanova (near Barcelona).

The Forum was opened on 20 April by Mr Pere Calvet, Director General of FGC and President of UITP, Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General, and Mr Enric Ticó i Buxadós, President of FGC.

Pere Calvet expressed his gratitude on behalf of UITP (International Union of Public Transport) for having been invited to open the first TopRail. He said: “UIC and the UITP share many common goals and have to deal with similar technical, social and regulatory issues and we are working to strengthen this links and develop common working schemas ... the business-oriented approach, customer satisfaction, modal transfer, ticketing, are part of TopRail and also part of the daily challenges for urban public transport providers all over the world.

In a world with an increasing urban population, public transport has a key role to play. Without an efficient public transport system, it would be impossible to achieve liveable and sustainable cities.”

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux began by thanking Pere Calvet, the team at FGC and Carles Casas, Chairman of TopRail, for their commitment to the project from the very beginning.

He said: “Tourism and transport are inherently and historically linked. TopRail is a commitment to address the challenge of facing the future of railways not only from a nostalgic point of view that special trains can provide, but also to support tourist experiences on railways as a strategic framework for ensuring an attractive and positive image of the railways in the generations to come.”

Three panel sessions then addressed the issues of railways in relation to sustainable tourism, regional development and the preservation of heritage. Participants discussed how the railway industry can contribute to fostering well managed tourism, sustainable development, job creation and trade by looking at issues such as:

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- **The impact of increasing tourism on current infrastructure**
- **How rail tourism can contribute to sustainability**
- **Examples of good practices in rail tourism**
- **How to make the most of rail heritage and to make it an income generator**

The closing session was delivered by Marc Guigon, Director of the UIC Passenger Department. He said that UIC started TopRail to meet the demand for sustainable tourism and extended a special thanks to Vanessa Perez for her efforts in making the event a success.

During the second day of the First TopRail Forum, the participants enjoyed a visit to the Railway Museum of Villanova i la Geltrú run by the Director of the Museum, Pilar Garcia; She explained to the participants the past, present and future projects of this particular Museum that aims to show the contribution of the railways to the economic and social development of the area, emphasising the importance of people at all times.

At the end of the conference, it was announced that the second TopRail Forum will take place next year in Italy, kindly hosted by the Italian Railway Foundation.

Italy: FS Italiane proposes development of railway tourism through soft mobility and sustainable itineraries by train

During the 1st TopRail Forum, Trenitalia and Fondazione FS Italiane have launched initiatives to increase awareness of railway tourism as well as contributing to the growth of this innovative sector in tourism. Regional rail tourism, serviced by Trenitalia, rose 7% in 2017. Trenitalia's goal is to promote the history and culture of Italian villages, which are easily reached by train, a means of transport that is environmentally-sustainable, convenient, safe, and with the new Rock and Pop trains, increasingly comfortable.

In Barcelona Trenitalia presented the integrated 5 Terre Express offer that allows visitors to visit the scenic stretch of the Ligurian coast (part of the UNESCO World Heritage list) on board regional trains. The trains stop in all the villages in the Cinque Terre Park: Monterosso, Corniglia, Vernazza, Manarola and Riomaggiore. Trenitalia also presented its collaboration with the association I Borghi più Belli d'Italia. The association promotes festivals, exhibitions, fairs, conferences and concerts that promote the artistic and architectural heritage of smaller Italian towns. Out of the 282 villages promoted by the association, 23 can be easily reached with regional trains, with a total of 580 daily connections.

, Fondazione FS Italiane promoted the historic trains it operates in eight regions in Italy. In Tuscany, Ferrovia della Val d'Orcia, between Asciano and Monte Antico (51 km); Ferrovia del Parco, between Sulmona and Carpinone that connects Abruzzo and Molise (118 km); and in Sicily la Ferrovia dei Templi, between Agrigento Bassa and Porto Empedocle (12 km).

During the two-year period 2016-2017, 130,000 tourists travelled on board historic trains of Fondazione FS Italiane. This was a 45% increase compared to the previous two-year period (2014-2015). The National Railway Museum of Pietrarsa, which hosts a collection of historic locomotives and carriages owned by FS Italiane, was recently restored at a cost of about 20 million euros, and registered a record number of visitors in 2017: over 110,000, +58% compared to 2016 and +647% compared to 2014.

(Source: FS Italiane Group)

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US: Old Town Sacramento Relives Rail, River History.

This beautiful city on the Sacramento River is the center of a region with a rich history and a knack for historical preservation. The epicenter is Old Town on the riverfront, officially known as the Old Sacramento Historic District, a U.S. National Historic Landmark District. It is a short walk from the Capitol.

Filling 28 acres, this authentically restored area was the terminus of the transcontinental railroad and the Pony Express. It was also the Golden State's first booming business district. It became the supply center for the California gold rush and remains a center of agricultural trade. **Continue reading at:**

<http://atlantajewishtimes.timesofisrael.com/old-town-sacramento-relives-rail-river-history/>

US: Funds Sought to Rehab Railroad Roundhouse as Museum.

Two groups have announced an effort to preserve the McKeesport Connecting Railroad roundhouse at the former U.S. Steel National Works site.

In a press release, the recently formed Steel City Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, Inc., and the McKeesport Preservation Society said they will hold a fundraiser at Teutonia Mannechor on Pittsburgh's North Side at 5 p.m. June 16 to kick off their effort.

Tickets are \$50 for members of the railway society and \$75 for non-members.

The groups envision reusing the building, which once serviced steam and diesel locomotives for the railroad, as the "Western Pennsylvania Railroad and Transportation Museum."

Continue reading at: <http://almanac.tubecityonline.com/almanac/?e=992>

US:Port Huron Museum will restore 140-year-old steam locomotive.

A hidden gem that is being brought out into the open and given a new setting. Thanks to the Community Foundation of St. Clair County and a \$25,000 grant from CN, the Harrington will be cosmetically restored and placed in a new building where it will be more accessible to the public, said Campbell, most likely at the Thomas Edison Depot Museum near the Blue Water Bridge.

The small steam engine pulled cars on tracks 3 feet apart instead of the standard 4 feet, 8.5 inches. It was built in 1878 by Porter, Bell & Co. of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and was used by the Port Huron and Detroit Railroad in lumber camps in the Thumb.

"This is the engine that opened up the interior of the Thumb," said T.J. Gaffney, local historian and railroad enthusiast. He owns Streamline Historic Services LLC in Port Huron.

"Think of your major and smaller cities in Sanilac and Huron counties and this was the first train they ever saw," he said.

"On top of that, if you're into the builder that made the engine, this is the third oldest Porter product in existence."

<https://www.thetimesherald.com/story/news/local/port-huron/2018/04/26/port-huron-museum-restore-140-year-old-steam-locomotive/553896002/>

National Travel and Tourism Week, Train Day May 6-12

Dodge City will observe National Travel and Tourism Week from May 6 to May 12 and National Train Day on May 12. The annual National Travel and Tourism Week is designed to draw attention to, enhance perceptions of, and recognize the economic, social, and cultural impacts of tourism.

<http://www.dodgeglobe.com/news/20180427/national-travel-and-tourism-week-train-day-may-6-12>

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Australia:Technology to step in to the driver's seat to tell our heritage stories at Ballarat Heritage Weekend on May 26-27.

The two-day event, on May 26 and 27, will celebrate the city's past achievements and future endeavours by focussing on technology and innovation over the previous 100 years.

Modern technology including virtual reality, smartphones and robots will help unlock the city's past.

<https://www.thecourier.com.au/story/5372296/modern-twist-on-heritage/?cs=62>

UK:Railway enthusiasts are set to launch another attempt at reopening a disused railway line in Snowdonia.

The Trawsfynydd Railway Company lost their Network Rail licence to clear the seven-mile track between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd after damage was caused to a bridge last August.

<http://www.cambrian-news.co.uk/article.cfm?id=118957&headline=Railway%20plan%20hits%20buffers%20after%20licence%20is%20revoked§ionIs=news&searchyear=2018>

Taiwan:TRA announces ticket exchange program with Japanese railway to boost tourism.

The Taiwan Railways Administration (TRA) and the Shinano Railway Co., Ltd. announced a ticket exchange program today between the two railways to **boost tourism**.

Beginning May 7, passengers can exchange a TRA day pass for a Shinano Railway Banzai 2-day pass for free, according to CNA. The offer is valid for one year.

<https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3423508>

Finally, this brief(!!) newsletter will be the order of things to come!

It will be appreciated if members can alert the Editor to events in their local area with which WATTRAIN are directly involved.

In so doing, the WATTRAIN motto will truly come into its own!!

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