



SUMMER 2019 SMOKESTACK

Summer in England can be a heatwave or persistent rain. Rain at the moment I fear and cool weather. Still, it is summer and time to keep IFRR members informed now the dust has settled after the RI Convention in Hamburg.

July 2019

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

RI Convention is normally our only chance to get together as IFRR members and I was hoping to make some new contacts as well. As we will see later this proved difficult.

Convention itself was the usual format. A mixture of motivational general meetings and breakout sessions. The main difficulty for my wife and I was the distance apart these were from each other and from the House of Friendship. If you are having some difficulty walking far this can be a discouragement from attending all sessions. In some cases, also breakout sessions I needed to attend and of similar subjects were at the same time. Fortunately, most are on record.

In previous issues of Smokestack and in email contacts before Convention members will remember that it was difficult for us to gain a booth in the House of Friendship and it was disappointing to arrive in Hamburg to find several booths unused for the whole Convention period. In a way this was a help in releasing the limited number of officers attending to get around and meet other Rotarians and friends and not need to be at a booth the whole time. Despite direct requests to DB and similar bodies we did not get any direct material to show and I must say I feel how lucky we were last year in Toronto to have local help and such willing cooperation from the Toronto Transit staff and the Toronto Railway Museum.

Those of us with hotels outside the Convention area did have the chance to sample the excellent local transport U Bahn and S Bahn networks in Hamburg and I must place on record our thanks to Rotary International and Hamburg's Transport Authority for arranging free travel for the duration of the Convention just be wearing a Convention badge. It was well used by us all.



Part of the subway U Bahn rises to be an overhead railway near the river and gives an Englishman like myself a reminder of what the Liverpool Overhead Railway (which closed in 1956) in another famous Port was like. The weather here was rather like north west England. Raining!

Sadly, with my own need to get back to England after Convention, and my involvement with a Club twinning visit to Marburg some 4 hours away beforehand, it was not possible to arrange and pre or post-Convention tour. Indeed, with the lack of certainty on how many IFRR members were attending this was doubly difficult anyway.

What was possible was a visit to a world-famous local model railway attraction, Miniatur Wunderland. With the such sparse IFRR attendance and take-up we had to leave this to individual attenders. Anyone who missed it lost the chance for a fascinating visit to a site that kept us enthralled for hours.

Miniatur Wunderland (German for 'miniature wonderland') is a set of working model railway dioramas (plus a miniature airport model of the local main airport), and the largest of its kind in the world. Its location in the historic Speicherstadt district of the city is impressive enough in itself. The exhibit includes over 1,300 trains made up of over 10,000 carriages, over 100,000 moving vehicles, ca. 500,000 lights, 130,000 trees, and 400,000 human figurines. The sections are still expanding, and work was taking place on one for Monaco when we visited. A summary of the areas is below.

Section	Name	Completion date	Size
1	Harz/Central Germany	August 2001	c. 120 m ² (1,300 sq. ft)
2	Knuffingen	August 2001	c. 120 m ² (1,300 sq. ft)
3	Austria	August 2001	c. 60 m ² (650 sq. ft)
4	Hamburg	November 2002	c. 200 m ² (2,200 sq. ft)
5	United States	December 2003	c. 100 m ² (1,100 sq. ft)
6	Scandinavia	July 2005	c. 300 m ² (3,200 sq. ft)
7	Switzerland	November 2007	c. 250 m ² (2,700 sq. ft)
8	Knuffingen Airport	May 2011	c. 150 m ² (1,600 sq. ft)
9	Italy	September 2016	c. 190 m ² (2,000 sq. ft)
9 a.	Venice (as part to the Italy section)	February 2018	c. 10 m ² (110 sq. ft)
10	Fun Fair	November 2019	c. 9 m ² (97 sq. ft)
11 a.	Monaco (with Formula 1 Circuit)	November 2020	c. 36 m ² (390 sq. ft)
11 b.	Provence	November 2020	c. 27 m ² (290 sq. ft)
12	England	2022 (planned)	Up to c. 3,000 m ² (32,000 sq. ft)
13	France	2024 (planned)	
14	Benelux	2026 (planned)	
15	Africa/pan-Asia/India	2028 (planned)	

As you may see it is worth going back to see again!

My wife Enid and I went together and were joined by our ever helpful and energetic Vice President Curtis Reinhardt. We cannot do more than recommend it to any visitor to northern Germany. DO make the effort and give yourself at least half a day to see it all. Buying an advance ticket saves queuing to get in, which can be a problem at busy times. The website gives most details. <https://www.miniatur-wunderland.com>

(We hope that other IFRR members attending the Convention managed to see it too.)

AGM

Despite our best efforts we could not get together a really sufficient number of IFRR members to have any kind of formal AGM. Those few there that had responded to our notice assembled near the IFRR Musicians booth and made our way to a quiet area. We did attract new members though, which is gratifying in the restricted circumstances. We welcome Remi Bello from the Rotary Club of Ikeja South (D 1190 Nigeria) and Dr. Matthias Lachenmann from D 7810 in Germany.

In addition to the new members above, other members present who signed in were, President Robert Bracegirdle, Vice President Curtis Reinhardt, Treasurer John Evans, and Don Bell of Toronto. Apologies were received from Vice President of Excursions and Database Management, Bruce McNaught.

With so few attending the meeting was fairly informal. President Robert remarked on the difficulties we had had in finding local involvement this year and the lack of an allocation of a booth in the HoF when on arrival there were so many still free. He thanked all the other officers for their support, especially after his heart problems the previous October leading to a faint and a skull fracture.

We discussed contacting members and decided to retain the cost-free contact via email with at least three Smokestack newsletters a year (usually more). Once again, we thanked Bruce for organising this.

John Evans reported as usual as Honorary Treasurer as this being the simplest report ever as we have no dues and for the time being no funds to move. Subsequent discussion on a possible pin for members to wear took place and it was thought that only sponsorship at the moment would enable us to produce these. President Robert would try to contact a potential supplier known to him for costs. Other local developments such as excursions would necessarily have to be left to local members in each District or Country.

Regarding other developments it was thought that we need other contributions from all areas of the world. The President was understandably mainly restricted to British items unless on vacation and more general appeal was needed. It was agreed that all members should be encouraged to contribute items to Smokestack from time to time for everyone's interest.

Finally, the proposed visit to Miniatur Wunderland was discussed and, because of the low numbers at the meeting, it was left to individuals to arrange their own visits as allowed in the Convention timings.

We re-elected the officers as last year in the absence of any other nominations.

President Robert thanked everyone for their attendance, and we returned to the Convention.

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