

AIHC – IRHA – AIHF

THE INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



EDITORIAL

by Fernanda de LIMA LOURENCETTI

Chief-Editor

The relationship between man and time has changed, as has the relationship between man and space. It's incredible to think how much rail transport has contributed to this over the last 200 years!

In 1837, between Paris and Saint-Germain in France, a train travelled at an astonishing 41 km/h! In 1849, just 12 years later, Stephenson's 'Crampton' reached an incredible 104 km/h, a locomotive that transported Napoleon III from Marseille to Paris at 100 km/h. In 1889, this same locomotive reached a staggering 144 km/h in a competition!

Along the Dijon-Beaune path (Paris-Lyon line), in 1954, powered by electricity, the train reached 243 km/h, and an incredible 320 km/h on the Bordeaux-Hendaye line. However, it was only ten years later, in Japan, that the history of high-speed trains really began. This country and France have played a major role in this history, as they have power stations that supply electricity in large quantities. In 2007, during a test run on the Paris-Strasbourg line, an incredible French TGV reached a whopping speed of 574.80km/h!

Like the current trains, the next event organised by IRHA is coming at high speed – and we couldn't be more excited! This newsletter is full of information about it, railway history, events, and publications from around the world.

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Reviewed by: Anthony Heywood

We hope you enjoy reading this issue!

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Andrea GIUNTINI

President of IRHA

This forthcoming **27 September** is a date of particular significance in railway history. This signifies a substantial epochal shift, often referred to as **the world's entry into modernity**. On this day, **two hundred years ago**, the inaugural section of the **railway, equipped with mechanical traction**, commenced operation. The railway's origins can be traced to the Darlington mines, from which it extended towards the port of Stockton in the north of England. The railway, which extended for a total of 32 km, was primarily constructed for the purpose of transporting coal. However, it was also conceptualised with the intention of accommodating passenger traffic from its inception.

Following a period of extensive experimentation, the inaugural utilisation of a steam locomotive occurred. A span of

four years elapsed before the ingenious **Stephenson's creation of the renowned Rocket**, a machine that, at the time, was regarded as highly sophisticated and was **employed along the Liverpool-Manchester route**. This information is well documented among railway historians, yet **it merits further attention**. It is **for this reason that the International Railway History Association (IRHA) is organising a one-day conference**. This will take place **on Friday 21 November in Paris at the Gare de Montparnasse**. As an association specialising in this field, we consider such an event, in which outstanding scholars from several European countries will participate, to be essential.

The event will naturally be open to anyone who is interested, according to our traditional spirit, and there will be no registration fee. For our association this is a very challenging commitment, one

year after the Siena conference, for the success of which we have been working for some time. **We will circulate the detailed programme as soon as the final details have been final.**

Inauguration of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, by John Dobbin, around 1825



RAILWAYS, PARK AND MUSEUM: CAMPOS DO JORDÃO (BRAZIL)

The process of transferring the concession of the century-old Brazilian railway **Estrada de Ferro Campos do Jordão (EFCJ)** for the private sector has entered the public consultation phase. The plan is to invest R\$400 million in **restoring the railway's tourist complex and resuming passenger transport along the 47 kilometres of tracks that connect Campos do Jordão to Pindamonhangaba**, in the interior of São Paulo. The tracks run along the Serra da Mantiqueira, revealing exuberant scenery.

The railway was conceived by health doctors Emílio Ribas and Victor Godinho to provide faster and more comfortable access for people seeking treatment for tuberculosis at the sanatoriums in Campos de Jordão. **Construction was authorised by the state government in November 1910 and the 47 kilometres of track were laid in record time, with the inauguration in November 1914.**

Two years later, due to the First World War, the shareholders ran into financial problems and authorised the railway to be **taken over by the state. In 1916, the steam locomotives were replaced by petrol ones and, in 1934, the electrification of the line was completed** by English Electric. The trains began to carry freight as well as people, but from **1977 they were once again used exclusively for passenger transport.**

In 2011, the EFCJ was taken over by the Metropolitan Transport Secretariat.

In 2017, an accident involving a train with 40 passengers that came off the rails on the route between Santo Antônio do Pinhal and Campos do Jordão left no-one injured, but led to **the suspension of transport.** In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the railway line was the target of more than 80 thefts, with 30 kilometres of overhead power lines stolen from the network, which resulted in more than 100 network support poles being knocked down.

The concession proposal from the State Secretariat for Investment Partnerships includes the **modernisation of the line and the restoration of stations and workshops. The project also includes improvements to the Águas Claras Kingdom Park in Pindamonhangaba and the Railway Memory Museum in Campos do Jordão.**

Until 23 June, citizens, companies, experts and other interested parties could submit comments about the project, which is scheduled to be published in the second half of 2025. Information about the project and how to take part in the consultation is available on the [SPI website](#).

Source: [Revista Ferroviária](#) (translated by Fernanda Lourencetti)

ON ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY, SOROCABANA RAILWAY LIVES ON IN ITS GLORIOUS PAST AND THE SIGNS OF ABANDONMENT

"Gentlemen! Today I give you the Sorocabana Railway! It is the image of progress!"
(Luiz Matheus Maylasky)

150 years ago, a whistle blew in Sorocaba (Brazil/SP) with the arrival of the first train in the city. It was also the arrival of a new era: the Sorocabana Railway (EFS), conceived by businessman Luiz Matheus Maylasky **to connect the capital of São Paulo to the Real Fábrica de Ferro de São João de Ypanema (now Iperó)**. It became one of the most important railways in Brazil.

Construction began in 1872 and three years later the first 110-kilometre stretch was officially opened. **Its Station was the first brick-built building in the municipality.** Powered by a small steam locomotive imported from Belgium, the **first train officially arrived in Sorocaba at around 3pm on 10 July 1875.**

The Sorocabana Railway (EFS) also **played an important role in the 1932 Revolution, when São Paulo soldiers used the line to go to the front with the Armoured Train**, built in the railway's workshops in Sorocaba. It became known as the **'Phantom of Death'**. The EFS became one of the largest railways in Brazil, reaching a track network of **2,172 kilometres** at its peak in 1959.

The decline of the Sorocabana Railway coincided with the development of motorways in the **1960s**. From the peak of its network expansion, the railway began to 'shrink', closing branches and no longer serving several cities.

In **1971**, the old Sorocabana was one of the five São Paulo railways that formed **Ferrovias Paulista S.A. (Fepasa)**, which was handed over to the **federal government in 1998** as part of the renegotiation of the state's debt with the federal government. Split up and handed over to various private consortia, **it is now largely abandoned, with disused stations and inactive tracks.**

TAKE A LOOK AT SOME **HISTORICAL IMAGES AND VIDEOS** AT [G1 \(Sorocaba e Jundiá\) website.](#)

Source: [G1](#) (translated by Fernanda Lourencetti)

IV MEETING OF RAILWAY HISTORY ‘UNIVERSITY OF VALLADOLID’

On June 12th, the **IV Encuentro de Historia Ferroviaria ‘Universidad de Valladolid’** was held at the University of Valladolid, exploring the **echoes that the first public railway in the world between Stockton-on-Tees and Darlington (United Kingdom) had in Spain.**



María del Valle Santos Álvarez and Pedro Pablo Ortúñez

The meeting was **opened by:**

- **María del Valle Santos Álvarez**, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Studies at the University of Valladolid, who highlighted the opportunity of hosting a seminar dedicated to a means of transport that was, and still is, fundamental for the economy and society.
- **Pedro Pablo Ortúñez**, Director of the Department of Economic History of the University of Valladolid, who

underlined the importance of the inauguration of the Stockton-on-Tees-Darlington Railway, given that it was the beginning of a transport system without which contemporary history would have been very different.



Miguel Muñoz
and Juan
Carlos Ponce



Francisco de
los Cobos and
Francisco Polo

The meeting started with a presentation made by **Miguel Muñoz, historian and president of ASIHF**, followed by Juan Carlos Ponce, **Doctor in Hispanic Philology**, and **Francisco de los Cobos**, lecturer at the University of Castilla y La Mancha.

The event was closed by **Francisco Polo Muriel**, Manager of Historical Research and Documentation of the Fundación de los Ferrocarriles Españoles.

Source: [Asociación Ibérica de Historia Ferroviaria](#)
(translated by Fernanda Lourencetti)

EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS

THE 32ND EDITION OF THE CAMINOS DE HIERRO INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Fundación de los Ferrocarriles Españoles

On 25 May the prize of the 32nd edition of the international photographic competition was awarded to the **Argentinian, Leonardo Horacio Fainbich**. He is a self-taught photographer who has received several prizes in international competitions, such as the Sony World Photography Awards, El Placer de Leer or the Siena Creative Photo Awards, and has participated in various exhibitions and publications.

The **second prize went to Javier Arcenillas from Spain**, professor of Documentary Photography at the PICA School and creator of photobooks.

In the new category “Iron Roads on Instagram”, the prize went to the photographer specialising in social documentaries, **Seyyed Mohammad Vahid Nasser**. Four other authors (Lestonnac Ibáñez Vilas, José Ramón Luna de la Ossa, Aung Kyaw Zaw and Majid Hojati) received runners-up prizes in this edition of the competition.



Source: [Fundación de los Ferrocarriles Españoles](#)
(translated by Fernanda Lourencetti)

XXIX ECONOMIC HISTORY CONFERENCE

San Salvador de Jujuy, 24 September to 26 September, 2025

Organised by the Argentine Civil Association of Economic History; Faculty of Economic Sciences, National University of Jujuy; Interdisciplinary Centre for Research in Technologies and Social Development for the North-East Argentina (CI TED), Regional History Research Unit, the 29th Economic History Conference will include a **section called Services, transport and tourism**.

This Section will be coordinated by Teresita M.C. Gómez Milo (University of Buenos Aires) and Maria Teresa Bovi (Universidad Nacional de Jujuy).



Source: [Association of Economic History of Argentina](#) (translated by Fernanda Lourencetti)

FRANÇOIS CARON PRIZE_ ASSOCIATION RAILS ET HISTOIRE.

21 of November, 2025

In 2025, the Association Rails and History created the **François Caron Prize, which will reward the author of a thesis** in the humanities and social sciences, architecture, or engineering. Focused on railways or any rail transport, the work should have a historical perspective.

This award is not only a **tribute to François Caron on an intellectual and human level**, but also a duty of **remembrance for the Association Rails et Histoire**, for several reasons.

In May 1987, F. Caron was one of the **founders of the Association and Chairman of its Scientific Committee until 2012**; his remarkable scientific work, devoted in particular to the *Compagnie de chemin de fer du Nord* (his doctoral thesis defended in 1969 and published in 1973), and the history of railways in France from their distant origins until 1997, made him a leading specialist in railway history, recognised by the French and international academic world.

François
Caron



For this first edition of the Prize, the Rails and History Association **received seven applications**, three of which were submitted by foreign candidates (Spain, Italy and England).

Chaired by Michèle Merger, who was François Caron's first student and succeeded him as chair of the Scientific Committee from 2012 to 2017, **the jury includes two experts per application and will deliberate in October.**

The award ceremony will take place on 21 November, marking the conclusion of the **symposium** dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the first passenger railway line between Stockton and Darlington, **organised by the International Railway History Association in collaboration with Rails et Histoire.**

By Michèle Merger
(translated by Fernanda Lourencetti)

II COLLOQUIUM CITY, RAIL AND PORT

17 and 18 of October, 2025

The Network of Studies on Cities, Railways and Ports is organising a **second colloquium in Madrid**.

On October, 17, the **Universidad Rey Juan Carlos** will host the event in **Vicálvaro Campus**.

A technical visit to the Abroñigal

Logistics Centre is scheduled for the 18th, led by one of RENFE Mercancías' managers.

For more information:
interknowledge.uevora.pt

City, Rail and Port
InterKnowledge

RAILWAY READINGS

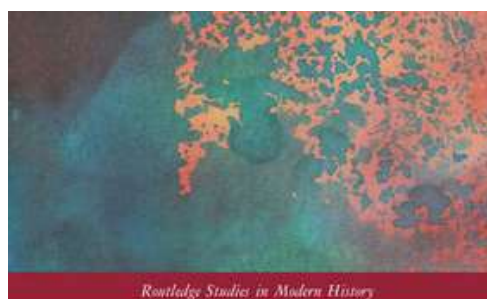
TRANSPORTES Y SERVICIOS ARGENTINA, BRASIL E MÉXICO

Coordinated by: Alcides Goularti Filho, Teresita Gómez and José Antonio Mateo

In September, the book '**Transport and Services: Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico**' will be presented by Teresita M.C. Gómez Milo (University of Buenos Aires). The book was coordinated by her, José Antonio Mateo (Universidad Nacional de Entre Ríos, Argentina) Alcides Goularti Filho (Universidade do Extremo Sul Catarinense, Brasil).

Published in 2024 by the University of the Far South of Santa Catarina and the Publishing House of the National University of Entre Ríos, this book brings together the work of a group of researchers who have addressed the establishment of a transport infrastructure in economic historiography, mainly in the last century, in relation to the three largest countries on the subcontinent: Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico.



RAILWAYS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR, VOLUME 1**Edited by:** Andrea Giuntini, Henry Jacolin**RAILWAYS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR, VOLUME 1**Edited by
Andrea Giuntini and Henry Jacolin

After a long wait, we are finally pleased to **announce the forthcoming release of the first of the two volumes of the Budapest Proceedings**, scheduled for publication by [Taylor and Francis](https://www.tandfonline.com) on the **27th of October**.

This volume brings together original contributions from scholars and researchers affiliated with our association, representing a wide range of academic backgrounds and countries. **The project stems from the 8th International Railway Conference, which was held in Budapest from November 28 to December 1, 2018, under the theme “Railways in the First World War”.**

The book reflects the collective effort to explore, and rediscover, the historical significance of railways during a pivotal moment in global history. It opens with an introduction by the two editors, Andrea Giuntini and Henry Jacolin, and is organized into four thematic sections, combining chronological and geographical perspectives: **1. The Centrality of Railways during World War One ; 2. Before the War; 3. Railway Networks during the War in Western Europe; 4. Railway Networks during the War in Central and Eastern Europe.**

The volume includes research, articles, and analyses by 22 different authors affiliated with our association. In order of appearance: Andrea Giuntini & Henry Jacolin (editors), Irene Anastasiadou, Ralf Roth, Laurence Henrik, Joshua Claussen, Anthony J. Heywood, Reinhard Nachtigal, Christopher Phillips, Marie-Noëlle Polino, Augustus J. Veenendaal, Paul J.G.M.J. Van Heesvelde & Joseph Van Olmen, Stefano Maggi, Miguel Muñoz Rubio & Pedro Pablo Ortúñez-Goicolea, Maciej Górny, János Majdán, Zsuzsa Frisnyák, Egor Lykov, Nevin Coşar & Sevtap Demirci

We are proud to [share](#) this important milestone for our association and look forward to its official release this October. We encourage you to [share](#) this announcement with anyone who might be interested.

By Federico Meneghini Sassoli

The online jornal [TST - Transportes, Servicios y Telecomunicaciones](#) launched the **issue 55** with interesting articles and books reviews about the railway world:

Las vías de la racionalización: el redimensionamiento del ferrocarril estatal en Argentina y sus resultados.

Alberto E. Müller

Antecedentes, desarrollo e impronta toponímica del proyecto de estación del Mármol (Hinojosa del Duque, Córdoba)

David Dobado López, Pablo Manuel Dobado Berrios

El impacto de Breda y Batignolles en el espacio urbano: construcción ferroviaria y desarrollo industrial a finales del siglo XIX

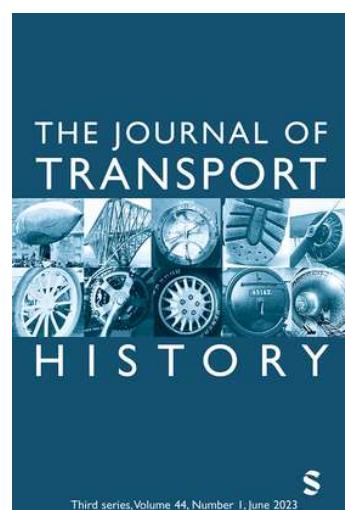
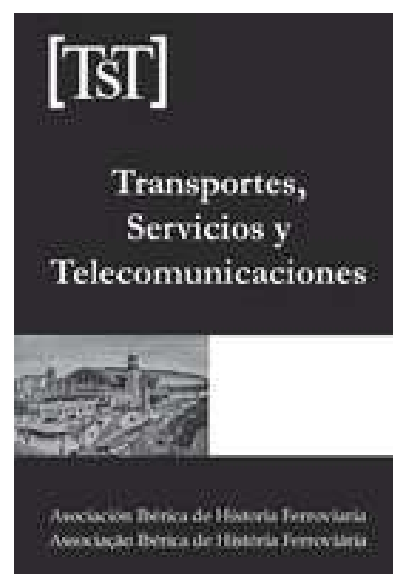
Federico Meneghini Sassoli

Miguel Muñoz Rubio, «Ochocientos brazos». El movimiento obrero en el ferrocarril durante el franquismo, Madrid, Anexo, 2020, 414 páginas.

Francisco Polo Muriel

Eduard Caballé Colom y Carles Gorini Santo, Ferroviaris en guerra. Revolució, guerra civil i repressió franquista als ferrocarrils catalans de via estreta, Lleida, Pagès Editors, 2024, 268 páginas.

Miguel Muñoz Rubio



The [Journal of Transport History \(JTH\)](#) published the issue 1, n.46 full of articles on mobility.

Turning to rail transport, the following review is highlighted:

Book Review: The Saga of Dakota Territory's First Railroad by Patrick M. Garry

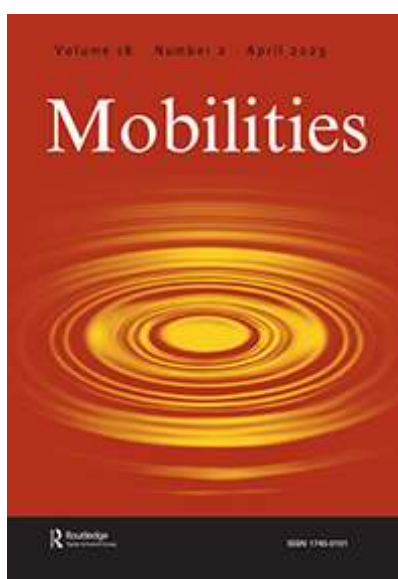
Albert Churella



Association Internationale
d'Histoire des Chemins de fer

International Railway
History Association

Asociacion Internacional
de Historia Ferroviaria



During 2025, the journal [Mobilities](#) published 3 issues!

In addition to other articles on mobility, these issues include:

Teaching mobility, teaching gender in the ladies' compartments of Mumbai local trains

Arundhathi

SEE YOU AROUND:

Do not forget to visit
our website!

**[https://aihc-irha-
aihf.com/](https://aihc-irha-aihf.com/)**

"Trains are wonderful... To travel by train is to see nature and human beings, towns and churches and rivers, in fact, to see life."

(Agatha Christie)

NEXT ISSUE

January 2026