



**Associació**  
del Museu de la Ciència i de la Tècnica  
i d'Arqueologia Industrial  
de Catalunya

## **Editorial**

# **EUROPA NOSTRA ACTIVITIES IN FAVOUR OF INDUSTRIAL AND ENGINEERING HERITAGE.**

**By Pierre LACONTE, Europa Nostra Council member, Chair of the Industrial and Engineering Heritage Committee.**

### **INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES.**

In 2008 Europa Nostra (EN), the voice of cultural heritage in Europe, in line with its Newcastle/Gateshead Declaration on "Securing the future of Europe's engineering heritage, decided to set up a taskforce (now a Committee), to put this Declaration in practice. Other EN Committees include one on European Policy, and the Scientific Council, whose Scientific Bulletins contain the proceedings of the yearly colloquia on European historic fortifications and military architecture.

Europa Nostra's objectives in creating this new Industrial and Engineering Heritage Committee (IEHC) are to increase the visibility of this field within its membership and to express its concern about the safeguard of this important type of heritage, namely towards associations presently active in this field. Foremost among them is the International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH), related to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). This has led EN to include Eusebi Casanelles i Rahola, President of TICCIH and head of Catalonia's Museu de la Ciència i de la Tècnica i d'Arqueologia, among the founding members of its new Committee.

Europa Nostra hopes to encourage associations active in the field to join its Pan European Federation and to participate in common Heritage in Danger campaigns and actions towards the preservation of endangered industrial and engineering structures, threatened by the present de-industrialisation of Europe. It also wishes to increase the knowledge about this type of heritage and to encourage its actors to submit entries to the yearly competition of the European Prize of the Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards. These awards cover not only the preservation, restoration and adaptive reuse of heritage but also research, education and dedicated service activities in favour of heritage.

The present members of the IEHC are: Dr Pierre Laconte (BE), *Chairman*, Drs. Rienko Wilton (NL), *Secretary*, Drs Hildebrand de Boer (NL), Ing. Eusebi Casanelles i Rahola (ES), Mr Angus Fowler (DE), Mrs Victoria Haworth (UK), Mr David Morgan, MBE, TD (UK), Dr Paul Smith (FR), Prof. Dr Dietrich Soyez (DE) and Mr Cyril Winskell, MBE, FRIBA (UK). Co-optations are to ensure optimal field and country coverage. A special mention is to be made of the Secretary, who is in charge of the on-going management and development of activities, and to his unrelenting commitment to the IEH cause (including the maintenance a small scale rail network in his garden). The IEHC puts a particular importance on the European significance of industrial achievements, illustrated by the Stumm Blast-furnace Museum in Uckange/Uckingen on the French-German border (Report by member Dieter Soyez, accessible on [www.ffue.org](http://www.ffue.org) – activities 2011).

### **ACTIVITIES - MEETINGS.**

The IEHC has from the onset endeavoured to the highest quality standards for its activities.

Its meetings are hosted in turn by one of its members and include a study tour of the main achievements in the Region where the meeting is held.

The founding meeting (3/2009) was hosted and organised by the Chairman in Central Brussels, in the former Saint-Géry market. This iron-vaulted market, after years of neglect and dilapidation, has been taken over by a private not-for-profit association and adapted into a conference and exhibition Centre, with cultural activities and a restaurant. The immediate success of this Centre has helped revitalise the whole neighbourhood and its surplus has allowed the reconstruction of the Art-Nouveau outside iron stalls. Visits – all in central Brussels – included former waterworks taken over by a restaurant, a factory adapted to host a large contemporary art collection, a former wine depot used as small business incubator and a coffee processing plant transformed into offices and apartments, all specially hosted for the IEHC by their owners. The second meeting (9/2009) was held in Freiberg, Saxony, in conjunction with the TICCIH Congress chaired by Eusebi Casanelles i Rahola, with the help of Dieter Soyez. Visits were the ones included in the TICCIH participants' programme. They included the Siemens Electricity plant, adapted into an industrial museum, and a huge coal conveyor, reminding one of the Eiffel Tower put on its side, and today a tourist attraction. The 3/2010 meeting was hosted by the Secretary in The Hague. A dinner at his home allowed a visit to his small scale rail network. The meeting was held at the EN headquarters, together with a briefing about heritage conservation in the Netherlands. The visits included a city tour in a vintage tram and a reception at the former tram depot (1908). The following meeting (10/2010) took place in Lille/Roubaix and was hosted by member Paul Smith, industrial heritage specialist of the French Ministry for Culture, and held in their Lille mansion. Visits included the Roubaix former baths, transformed into a celebrated Museum of Modern Art, and various former factories and textile plants transformed into museums or cultural activities, both in Roubaix and Lille. The latest meeting (3/2011) took place in Berlin and was hosted by member Angus Fowler, active in heritage conservation both in the UK and Germany. It was held at the former City Hall premises. The IEHC was greeted by Jörg Haspel, Landesconservator, who also joined part of the visits. These included the Deutschen Technikmuseums Berlin e.V., Electrostadt, a pioneering achievement in bringing closer together industry and housing, and the early developments of Adlershof. An additional full day programme was devoted to engineering achievements ranging from waterworks to cable factories. The members were also invited to attend the conference-debate introduced by Dr. Günter Dinhobl (Vienna) on "Railways and Protection – contradiction or chance?" at the Museum.

At the initiative of member David Morgan, President of the European Federation of Museum and Tourist Railways - Fedecrail, IEHC members were invited to an exclusive event held in Rome in May 2011: a visit to the 1932 Vatican Railway Station, hardly ever used, and the papal train, including its meeting and sleeping facilities, all in mint condition, and a heritage tour to Orvieto (see illustration).

#### **IEHC'S PRESENCE AT EN CONGRESSES AND FURTHER PERSPECTIVES.**

From the EN Congress of Istanbul (2010), the IEHC has been able to organise a special tour of industrial and engineering achievements in the Congress city, open to congress participants. In Istanbul the programme included various factories transformed into museums and culminated with the visit of the former "Sentral" power plant of the city (1911). This power plant, now part of the Bilgi University grounds, has been adapted to a thriving conference and exhibition centre while preserving the entire technical equipment, which has by itself become a major attraction (see illustration). This has kept the identity and memory of the place, by contrast to London's Tate Modern, which erased the memory of its former industrial use.

In the EN Amsterdam Congress (2011), partly held in a former Gas plant (now "Kultuurpark Westergas Fabriek"), the IEHC programme, organised by member Hildebrand De Boer (European Route of Industrial heritage and Holland Route) and open to Congress participants, included a trip by heritage tram through a landscape of backyards, ponds and canals, which was followed by a tour (in a vintage bus) of the three main pumping stations that were used for draining the Haarlemmermeer and building Schiphol airport, some 5 m. below sea level (see Illustration).

The IEHC is also pleased to notice the increasing number of awards for industrial and engineering achievements, for example in 2011 the Antwerp Central Station and the Aarschot water mills. Some members are involved in the evaluation process as assessors or as part of the jury.

The 2012 Congress is to be held in Lisbon, a city with a rich industrial and engineering heritage, and will again include a special tour, open to congress participants. The IEHC Secretary is already taking steps for this. Member Eusebi Casanelles i Rahola has agreed to organise it, together with the local organisers.

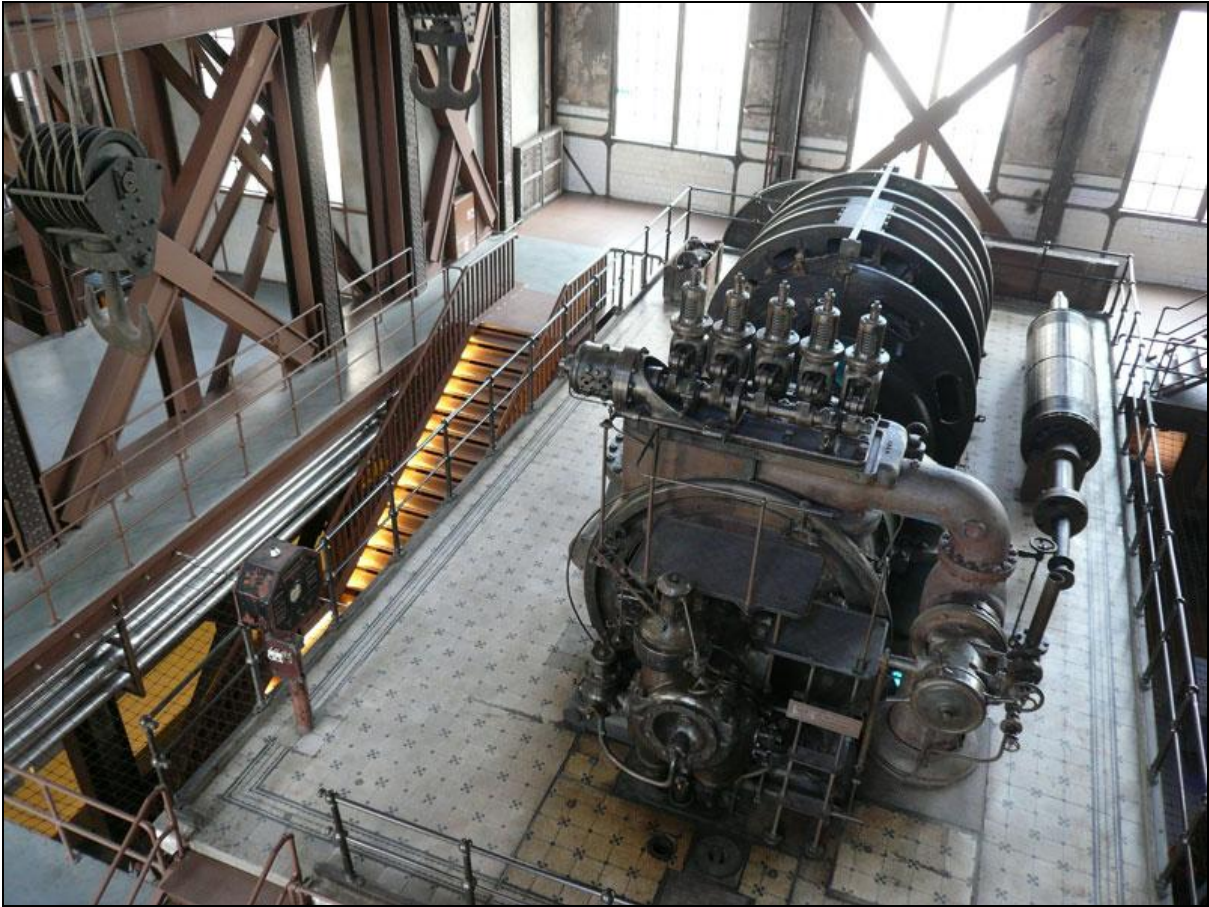
The IEHC is also ready to make a contribution to session programmes of future congresses, in line with the proposals made by its chairman in 2011.

May one express the hope that the increasing commitment of EN to the industrial and engineering heritage in Europe may attract more associations to join their efforts in favour of preserving the "cathedrals of the industrial age".

#### **ILLUSTRATIONS.**

1. Istanbul: Sentral Power plant fully preserved machinery.
2. Rome: 1932 papal train ready to cross the Vatican City wall for a heritage tour to Orvieto.
3. Haarlemmermeer pumping station: participants to the Amsterdam congress IEHC tour listening to the explanations by Ir. Hans Pluckel, Commissioner, Hoogheemraadschap Rijnland.
4. Pierre LACONTE

## ILLUSTRATIONS



Istanbul: Sentral Power plant (now conference and exhibition centre) fully preserved machinery.

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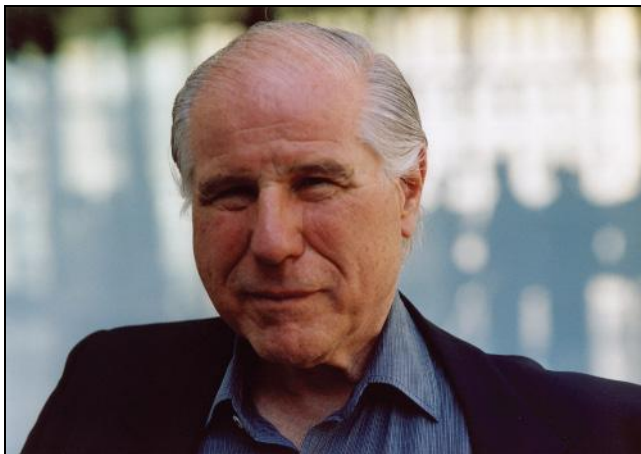
Rome: 1932 papal train ready to cross the Vatican City wall for a heritage tour to Orvieto.

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Haarlemmermeer pumping station: participants to the Amsterdam congress IEHC tour listening to the explanations by Ir. Hans Pluckel, Commissioner, Hoogheemraadschap Rijnland.

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