



FISAIC
1952...2022...!



When in the beginning of the second half of the XX century European railwaymen met in Strasbourg to establish the FISAIC, the deep wounds by the Word War II, hadn't healed yet! In the same year when Europe was divided by an iron curtain the first European Authority, the Union of Coal and Steel (EGKS), that later on led to the European Union began, its work in Luxemburg.

The desire, of **Marcel Mollion**, *President of the UAICF* and **Emile Birbaum**, *President of the Cultural Association of Swiss Railways*, to develop the culture and the friendships between railways from all countries, led to the idea of founding the first cultural union in Europe.

The foundation stone for the International Association for "culture and free-time activities" was laid on **15 November 1952** in **Strasbourg**, under the motto: "**one for each other and not against each other**".

Representatives countries as, **Germany, Austria Belgium, Spain, Luxembourg, Syria and Netherlands** accepted an invitation by Marcel Mollion (*France*) and Emile Birbaum (*Switzerland*).

Seven countries as **Denmark, Finland, Great Britain, Italy, Yugoslavia, Norway, Sweden**, indeed took a positive view of the matter.

The participants received the first drafts of the statutes and the procedural rules.

The countries of Eastern Europe, *except Yugoslavia which stayed in association until its dismemberment when Tito died*, were absences. The Europe after the war was cut in two.

On **27 June 1953**, the first general meeting took place in Paris and ten countries had sent their delegations:

Germany, Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Syria, Yugoslavia, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Switzerland. Their approvals expressed, **Denmark, Norway, Spain, Italy and Turkey.**



The acceptance of the statutes and the procedural rules, the development of a programme as well as the posting of a management committee, (*Board of Committee* in nowadays) symbolized important decision of the event.

That day in Paris the first Bureau was elected:

General President, Mr Marcel Mollion (France),

General Secretary, Mr Emile Birbaum (Switzerland),

Treasurer, Mr Aimé Chapuis (Switzerland).



Presidium of FISAIC
Geneva (Swiss) 1954

The positions Vice Presidents and Auditors, were passed to responsible persons of other national associations in a frequent change.

The following countries joined Fisaic since 1955:

Italy, Sweden, Greece, Norway, Denmark, Portugal, Israel, Spain, Poland, Great Britain, Hungary, Romania, Turkey, Bulgaria, Czech Republic.

Later as the results of the political changes, countries as, **Slovakia, Croatia and Estonia**, organized their own independent National Associations and joined in FISAIC.

In **September 1953**, the first International event of FISAIC an **Art Exhibition**, took place in **Nîmes (France)**. A calendar of events established with the desire for officials to involve as many countries as possible. **French** and **German** became the *two official languages of FISAIC*.

To honor the young federation and encourage it in its approach, **(UIC)** International Union of Railways, offered it a superb reproduction of the **“Venus of Arles”**, in **1958**.





On **February 27, 1954** binding commitments for the realization of international events were defined, which were added as binding basis in 1957.

Especially in **1957** after the development of catalogue covering a wide range of practicable festivals, exhibitions and competitions, special events received the necessary sense of quality.

FISAIC goals have remained the same since its establishment in **1952**, to promote and support cultural activities of the railwaymen, of all nations in their leisure time, to establish relations between national associations of the creative railwaymen, to organize and carry out international cultural events and programmes.

And through the years this goal succeeded. The railwaymen proved that they didn't just participate in cultural life but also

shared the ability to create culture and its values. So they with their deep interest achieved to show the real destination of FISAIC which is: "the promoting of existing interests in appropriate cultural free-time activities as far as possible".

Over these years Fisaic has proved that is a cultural umbrella for all the railwaymen who wants to have a creative free-time. Many additional bi- and multilateral occasions of certain countries have existed. Especially in the present, the interests of young people have taken new shapes, which is certainly furthered by quick pace development of science and technology.

Especially the technology has offer so many new supplies to the multitalent railwaymen artists who in each event they arouse the admiration of the spectators.

The activities of FISAIC members are: **Arts, photo, folklore, music, choir, philately, bridge, film and video, radio amateur, model railway, and ESPERANTO.**

ACTIVITIES





THE ARTS

The **Arts Exhibition** was the first official event of the new association. The founders of FISAIC believed that engaging railwaymen with artistic creations would help them to express their innate talent and that participating in an out of their borders competition would be a challenge for them.

In September 1953 in **Nîmes (France)**, the railwaymen artists presented their creations for the first time. It was the beginning!

1954 in **Brussels (Belgium)**, **1957** in **Bologna (Italy)**, **1958** in **Vienna (Austria)**, **1959** in **Munich (Germany)**, **1960** in **Budapest (Hungary)**. Since then every two years a new European country hosts a new Art Exhibition and the railwaymen artists joined to present their artworks.

Many railwaymen like to participate in artistic projects and to enjoy the company of like-minded, which certainly is a welcome change to the routine of a working day.

The arts play a privileged role within the railwaymen's free-time activities. Painting or drawing in aquarelles or gouache, acrylic or oil, mixed techniques, sculptures, installations, wood-carving or handicraft in other fields: *“Each process is a possible way to feel and understand the life”*.

Arts are more than just passing time away. Just the same amount of opportunities exist beyond your own national borders, productive friendships are waiting to be made.

Again and again it is the exchange of ideas that the painters and the sculptors need, whether they create their own work of art or imitate it.





PHOTOGRAPHY

The first **photo exhibition** of FISAIC took place in **Cologne (Germany)** in **1956**. Since then until **1966** the photography exhibition was an annual event which the railwaymen exhibited their photos. In **1966** in **Göteborg (Sweden)**, the technical committee proposed that the photography exhibition should be organized every two years. The proposal was approved and the next exhibition took place in **Ostend (Belgium)**, in **1968**.

A picture can express more than a thousand words. This guiding principle is still valid in photography. The topics and the techniques available in the hobby underline the deep interest in this very special issue.

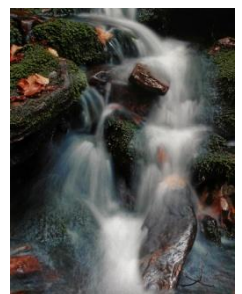
Black and white and coloured photos, as regular photos or photos with positive enlargements for exhibitions. Computer based

digital adaptations. Concepts of Dia presentations (*diaporama*), according to a chosen topic with background music, spoken texts or other sounds.

Photos such as landscape, portrait, sports, travelling or experimental photography, cover other wide ranges of the topic as well.

Within few decades, photography evolved into a **“Technology of Culture”**, which people use to express themselves.

During their free time, the railwaymen take advantage of it too, since their occupation and their environment offer very good opportunities.





PHILATELY

Philately is the study of postage stamps and postal history. It also refers to the collection, appreciation and research activities on stamps and other philatelic products. It's impossible to be a philatelist without owning any stamps.

Stamps collecting is a fun and addictive hobby that explores history, geography, art and politics. It can be a therapeutic activity or an opportunity to meet like-minded people and join clubs and societies.

Robert Stolz a great composer of numerous operettas and an enthusiastic stamp collector, characterized this exceptionally interesting and versatile hobby appropriately, when he said:

"Philately, is one of the most beautiful passions. It fulfills the curiosity and the romantic longing for foreign countries and cultures".

Always you will find philatelists among railwaymen. This kind of free-time activity satisfies a very special part of their life which they

have besides their jobs or families or even when they get older.

And the stamps collection passion of railway philatelists presented to the first exhibition of FISAIC which took place in **1961** in **Dijon (France)**. In the **5th International Philatelic Exhibition** of FISAIC which organized by the philatelist members of the **Luxembourg** railroad workers union in **1966** were published the first stamps.



The railway philatelists know that the philately is a bridge between nations and generations. Outstanding graphic artists try very hard to design stamps as business cards, according to the culture and economy of their countries.



**5th International Philatelic Exhibition
Luxembourg 1966**



FILM AND VIDEO

The **history of film** in the last period of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st was shaped in part by new technologies and the expansion of media culture that such technologies fostered.

Is not clear who actually made the first amateur movie but it is clear that amateurs as well as experts have made uncountable movie as high quality. The previously invented photography – which was indeed sensational-unfortunately couldn't report important expressions of life: human sequences of movements and gesture in his environment.

The invention of cinema made this possible, its beginnings evidently date back in 1890 since then it had developed very fast. Film and video editors manipulate images that entertain or inform an audience. Editors take footage shot by camera operators and organize it into a final product.

In the following years, the spread and increasing capabilities of computer animation as well as digital video cameras and DVDs

(digital video discs) accelerated these trends, with the computer emerging as a new production unit in filmmaking.

In **1965** the first railroader's 8mm film- **cinema** competitions- took place in **Verona (Italy)**. This type of competition prevailed until the event in **Gent (Belgium), 1987**.

In the beginnings of the 90s **film and video** competitions have already been established and achieved great popularity in FISAIC. Specifically the new technological innovation was used during the meeting in **Fribourg (Germany), 1989**.

The new innovation is now established in the next meetings, **1992** in **Épernay (France)**, **1993** in **Prague (Czech Republic)**, **1995** in **Berne (Swiss)**. Since then every two years a new event, a new competition for the railwaymen.

The issue “railroad” will always trigger and encourage new challenges.





RADIO AMATEUR

Radio amateur is a popular technical hobby.

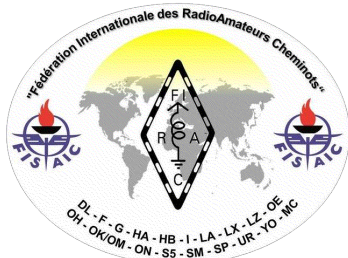
The origins of amateur radio can be traced to the late 19th century, but amateur radio as used it today began in the early 20th century.

The amateurs use a variety of voices, text, image and data communications.

This activity attracted the railwaymen who soon established groups of radio amateurs in free-time organizations who would get in touch with like-minded people of various countries.

The first international meeting of FISAIC took place on the **18th of September 1960** in **Geneva (Swiss)**. Then followed the meetings of **1962** in **Paris (France)** and of **1963** in **Bischheim (France)**.

FIRAC (*International Federation of Railway Radio Amateurs*), was founded during the 5th international meeting in **Hamburg (Germany)** in **1964**.



With the support of their national associations all groups of this free-time activity have joined the International Organization of railroad radio amateurs (**FIRAC**),



FIRAC CONGRESS 1991

which acts on an independent basis in the FISAIC and promotes relations to equal organizations,

"Friendship without Frontiers"





BRIDGE

Bridge is a card game, which has its origins in the arrival of playing cards in Europe from the Middle East in the *14th century*. Originally named **Triomphe** in *16th century* and later **Whist** in *18th century*. In **1925** the current game will be named **Bridge**. It is one of the oldest games in the history of card games.

Is a trick-taking card game using a standard 52-card deck. In its basic format, it is played by four players in two competing partnerships, with partners sitting opposite each other around a table. The game consists of a number of deals, each progressing through four phases.

Every scene is full of tension. For every game one needs a lot of luck. Of course Bridge does not step out of line: ***coincidence is on giving cards.***



Because of its demands in terms of playing skill and its never ending combination possibilities this game

of cards is very appreciated and plays a steady role in FISAIC's calendar of events.

The first international Bridge tournament of FISAIC took place in **Paris (France)** in **1956**. The tournaments, in **Gent (Belgium)** in **1957**, in **Stuben (Austria)** in **1958**, in **Wijk aan Zee (Netherlands)** in **1959**, in **Paris (France)** in **1960**, in **Kristinehamn (Sweden)** in **1961**, followed.

Since then just as many other free-time activities every two years Bridge competitions take place on an international basis.



Despite their various jobs, railroaders have been attracted to that game for many years, since they do not accept to be less as skilful as the game psychologically and emotionally demands.





MODEL RAILWAY

The **model railway** (*railway modeling*) is a hobby in which rail transport systems are modeled at a reduced scale. The scale models include locomotives, rolling stock, streetcars, tracks, signaling, cranes, and landscapes including: bridges, countryside, roads, buildings, vehicles, harbors, urban landscape, model figures, lights, and features such as rivers, hills, tunnels, and canyons.

Modelers may collect model trains, building a landscape for the trains to pass through. They may also operate their own railroad in miniature. For some modelers, the goal of building a layout is to eventually run it as if it were a real railroad (if the layout is based on the fancy of the builder) or as the real railroad did (if the layout is based on a prototype).



This free time activity's goal will not find a better definition than: ***“the cultivation and experience***

of the railway's history”.

Groups have made it to their responsibility to save and look after historical vehicles, machines and buildings and make it available to the public. And others deal with materials from archives to create interesting documentations and organize exhibitions.

Resourcefulness, insistence, specialized knowledge and a lot of free time are necessary.

The same is true for constructions of the model railroaders and their fantasy world on rails.

The supporters of this hobby are rather popular, since they try very hard to come close to the original and because they are even willing to give their imagination free space.



For the following generations, these precious experiences and testimonies will stay unforgettable.



CHOIRS

Choir is a group of people who sing together. This activity attracted the railway men in their free-time and quickly they integrated choral singing among these artistic disciplines. The regular chorister's festivals of various countries are greatly appreciated. Meetings of railroad choirs have evidently taken place since 1951.

The first international choir festival of **FISAIC** took place in **1969** in **Nuremberg (Germany)**. The festivals are open to all member countries and generally take place every three years. Each country is invited to present a choir.



In some countries, male choirs are in the majority - *the world of railways was initially very masculine* - and in others the mixed choirs are the most numerous.



The international technical commission of **FISAIC** choirs, is consists of a representative of the four most representative National Unions, namely Germany, Austria, France and Switzerland.

The choirs with the members symbolize a strong interest group. Within the national associations as well as internationally the choirs enjoy great popularity in the publicity because of their outstanding performances.



These events allow groups to get to know each other better and discover other singing practices. These exchanges energize our choirs through the unforgettable memories they bring back. The festival is also an opportunity to bring together all the delegates.

From these meetings exchanges are born that promote rapprochement between countries and through culture, a better understanding between the railwaymen.

This is how the spirit of FISAIC.



INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Music is an essential element of culture. Is the art of arranging sounds in time through the elements of melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre. It is one of the universal cultural aspects of all human societies.

Sharing music from one culture to another, gives people an insight into another way of life.

The relationship between culture and music can be simplified: *“**culture** helps to ensure people's survival, and **music** helps work towards that goal by bringing people together”*.

The creation, performance, significance and even the definition of music vary according to culture and social context.

The aim of FISAIC is to connect people, to create friendships, to promote the culture between the railroaders. For the railwaymen this activity in their leisure has a great popularity.

Over the years the railwaymen have created bands and orchestras and they have participated in many

festivals, in their countries and in international meetings.

The first music festival of **FISAIC** took place in **1959** in **Nancy (France)** -were mostly visited by wind orchestras.

In the same city, organized in **1963**, the second music festival. Since then many countries member of **FISAIC** have hosted international music festivals.



According to certain changes of interests an increasing number of bands with modern repertoires now also attend international meetings.

In the same time young people come together to form long lasting friendships on the basis of their own special language - a musical one.



“The music makes our life much brighter!”



FOLKLORE

Folklore is a branch of culture whose educational values are often ignored. It includes the art, stories, knowledges and practices of a people.

The word **“folklore”** names an enormous and deeply significant dimension of culture. This culture with the traditional beliefs, customs, and stories of a community, passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth.

Customs and traditions as well as the great variety of different cultures favor the closeness to the native countries.

As the world is increasingly globalized, preservation of traditional folklore and the ongoing development of new materials are important ways in which unique cultural expressions can be maintain and their wisdom transmitted to future generations.

This folklore culture has encouraged the railwaymen of FISAIC to create folklore groups. Most of the national associations have founded and supported the groups.

They mostly practice dance, music and singing in a very unique way.



Within the FISAIC they take their chances to compare various artistic performances, find out about a common ground and encourage understanding and respect for each other.

The first folklore festival of FISAIC took place in **Belgrade (Yugoslavia)** in **1967**. On **April 11, 2000**, an International Technical Commission of folklore was created within the FISAIC and placed under its responsibility. Since then the festivals of folklore take place as a rule every three years under the aegis of the FISAIC.



“Folklore is our cultural DNA!”





ESPERANTO

Esperanto is the most widely spoken constructed international auxiliary language in the world. Created by Polish ophthalmologist *Ludwik Lejzer Zamenhof* in **1887**.

L.L.Zamenhof, first described the language in pamphlets with the title “*Dr. Esperanto's International Language*”, which he published in 5 languages under the pseudonym: “*Doktoro Esperanto*”. *Zamenhof's* goal was to create an easy and flexible language that would serve as a universal second language for international communication.

The Esperanto flag and other Esperanto symbols have seen much consistency over the time of the language's existence. The main flag of Esperanto, featuring the Green Star (*Verda Stelo*), was adopted in **1905**, for use as a symbol of mutual recognition among Esperantists.

The flag is composed of a **green background** with a **white square** (canton) in the upper left hand corner, which in turn contains a **green star**. The *green field* symbolizes the hope, the white symbolizes peace and neutrality,



and the *five-pointed star* represents the five continents, (*Europe, Africa, Asia, America, Oceania*).

The railroaders, who have already followed the idea of an international understanding, respected the founding of *L.L.Zamenhof's* Esperanto and considered it to be a very significant step. The extraordinary easy and melodious language was their key to new connections.

The main characteristic was certainly that it was easily learnable. It is a neutral language with a logical structure.

IFEF, (*The International Railway Esperanto Federation*), was founded in **1948** and follows a tradition of its predecessor *IAEF* that has been going on since **1909**. *IFEF* has been a department of *UEA* since **1953** and is also a member of *FISAIC*. The *aim* is, to spread and apply Esperanto in the railway administrations and in the railway circles. *IFEF's motto* is:

*"The rails connect the countries,
Esperanto the peoples."*

IFEF is connecting Organization for all railwaymen, it is a firm part of the *FISAIC* and the connecting link to other equal worldwide associations.



