

ASPECTS OF FRANCONIA

November – The Transport Museum in Nuremberg

I recently took visitors to the DB (Deutsche Bahn) Museum in Nuremberg and was very impressed by what I found. Of course, many of the exhibits were there when I last looked by some 25 years ago, such as parts of the luxurious royal train made for the famous Bavarian king, Ludwig II (“Mad King Ludwig”), or the streamlined locomotives of the 1930’s, which reached speeds in excess of 100 miles an hour. A replica of the Newcastle-built train, the Adler, used for Germany’s first railway line, which began running from Nuremberg to Fürth in 1835, is also there. Its top speed was a dignified 40 mph. It also has the oldest steam locomotive in Germany still preserved in its original state, the Nordgau (built in 1853) and, coming back to the contemporary world, a mock-up of part of the traction coach of the ICE 3, which can zoom along at over 200 mph!

The museum presents not just wonderful locomotives from the past, but also explores the role of the railways from the Adler to nowadays, from the age of rapid industrialization and urban growth, to the problems of getting troops to the front in the Great War, or to the invention of a vacation industry in the early 20th century. The dark years of the Second World War also feature strongly when trains were employed to transfer Jewish families to their final destinations. It’s an honest and thorough account of the role and importance of the railway system at so many different times.

If you think a visit to the museum would be just up your street, sometime in December when Christmas is well and truly in the air, then let me know. As the poster below suggests, I’m sure something can be arranged.



A 1920's poster urging us to visit the Transport Museum