

RAILWAY HISTORY ANNIVERSARIES

The Cogwheel Railway on Sváb Hill is 150 years old and the production of steam engine no. 424 started 100 years ago



Magyar Posta is marking the two railway history anniversaries of 2024 with the issue of a commemorative miniature sheet. The Cogwheel Railway on Sváb Hill is 150 years old and the production of steam engine no. 424 started 100 years ago. Twenty thousand copies of the commemorative miniature sheet of four stamps designed by the graphic artist Imre Benedek were produced by the printing company Pénzjegynyomda Zrt. The new issue will be available at first day post offices and Filaposta in Hungary from 12 July 2024, but may also be ordered from Magyar Posta's online store.

The system, route and trains of the Sváb Hill Cogwheel Railway are an important part of the history of Hungarian transport. The railway has a special toothed, or rack, rail placed between the rails of a normal track, allowing the trains to overcome the steep gradient. Cogwheels fitted to the locomotive engage with the rack rail, driving the train up- and downhill. The inaugural steam-powered train ran on the Sváb Hill Cogwheel Railway on 24 June 1874. The Swiss-born engineer Ferenc Cathry Szaléz was commissioned with the construction and under his direction, the track and stations of the cogwheel railway were built in less than a year. The Sváb Hill Cogwheel Railway's passenger traffic grew steadily over the decades, and in the early 20th century it required modernisation. The railway was electrified and began carrying passengers on 2 June 1929. Today, Budapest's only cogwheel railway operates in District XII, running between the Városmajor and Széchenyi Hill stations.

Steam engine no. 424 (nicknamed "Buffalo" or "Nurmi" after the famous Finnish long-distance runner) is one of the most successful Hungarian locomotive series. The Hungarian Royal State Iron, Steel and Machine Factories (MÁVAG) built 514 of these engines between 1924 and 1958, 365 of them for the Hungarian State Railways (MÁV). Work on the design of these locomotives ordered by MÁV began during the First World War. Steam engine no. 424, the pride of Hungarian industry in the interwar period, also made its mark on Hungarian culture, appearing in literature, films and even pop music. Locomotive no. 424 was in regular service in Hungary until the end of the steam era in 1985, but today only two are still in operable condition. Some surviving 424 engines are on display, for example, in the temporary exhibition of the Hungarian Museum of Science, Technology and Transport, or permanently on Kőbánya Road in Budapest or at the railway stations in Dombóvár, Nagykanizsa, Tokaj and Szolnok.

424 steam engines and the steam and electrified locomotives of the Sváb Hill Cogwheel Railway appear on the stamps and in the frame of the commemorative miniature sheet. The first day cover features a graphic composition of the technical drawing of the 424. The imprint of the special postmark on the first day cover is a stylised drawing of a 19-toothed cogwheel.

Order code:

2024210040011 (miniature sheet)

2024210060012 (FDC)

Issued on: 12 July 2024**Total face value:** HUF 1,460

(On the date of issue, HUF 365 pays for a domestic priority letter up to 50 g, or postcard or picture postcard.)

Printing technique:

4-colour offset

Number of copies: 20,000

miniature sheets

Perforated size of stamps: 40 x

30 mm

External imperforated size of**miniature sheet:**

114 x 80 mm

Paper type:

White, wood-free, surface-treated, gummed stamp paper with optical whitener

Printed by

Pénzjegynyomda Zrt. (miniature sheet); Codex Zrt. (FDC)

Source: Hungarian Museum of Science, Technology and Transport

Designed by Imre Benedek