

2024 Programme Info

June 28th

Peter Keat will take us on a **'Meander around the Isle of Man'**

The Isle of Man is situated in the Irish Sea, between Great Britain and Ireland with a population of almost 85,000, it is a British Crown dependency. The Isle traces its history back many hundreds of years and is run by the oldest continuous parliament in the world, the Tynwald.

The transport history is unique and I will be looking at the various tramways, steam railways and historic sites. The Isle was the mecca for northern holidays between the wars and served as an internment centre during both world wars. The Isle is a charming place to visit.



July 26th

David Brace will present an illustrated talk on his 2018 journey from **'Basingstoke to Sicily by Rail'**. It will illustrate his planning and journey down through France and Italy to the train ferry across to Sicily and our travels by train around the island.



September 27th

Marc Heighway presents **"The History of Beaulieu Airfield"**

Starting from the lead-up to its construction, into wartime and through to modern day. The talk includes rarely before seen photography and film from the airfield, tales of bravery, inspiring stories and strange events that happened at the RAF and USAAF Station, plus tributes to the many men who lost their lives. It also includes a visual tour of what remains today and how you can visit the airfield yourself to see what evidence can be found.



October 25th

The Dee Railway Bridge Disaster of 1847

Crossing the River Dee heralded construction of the Chester to Holyhead Railway by Robert Stephenson. The sudden collapse of the bridge beneath a passenger train shocked the engineering profession.

Alan Hayward describes the novel design of cast iron sections bolted together and reinforced by wrought iron suspension chains, an early application of pre-stressing. A major Inquiry into iron bridges followed. "Trussed compound" bridges were banned. At least 60 similar bridges had to be propped or replaced. Standards were established for loading and safety factors. Lessons can be learned today in that structures should not only have calculated strength, but must be sufficiently robust.



November 29th

Paul Stickler presents **Britain's First Railway Murder**

In 1864, Britain took pride in the development of its railway providing the infrastructure to service the demands of Empire and revolutionising passenger travel. But its reputation was rocked by the violent and unexplained murder of a city gentleman, the very icon of all that was Victorian society. The presentation explores the subsequent criminal investigation and leaves the audience to decide on the guilt or otherwise of the man tried for the crime.

