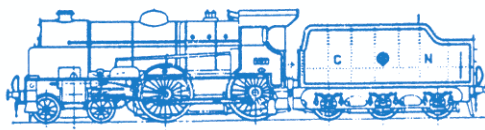


IRISH RAILWAY RECORD SOCIETY

LONDON AREA



www.irrslondon.com

irrslondon@hotmail.com

PROGRAMME 2024/25

The London Area of the IRRS provides a forum in South East England for those interested in Irish transport, particularly railways.

MONTHLY SPEAKER MEETINGS : OCTOBER - APRIL

18.00 – 20.45 on the dates shown below, except October

Please check our website www.irrslondon.com for any updates to our programme

LIVE MEETINGS are at **The Gallery at Alan Baxter, 77 Cowcross Street, Farringdon LONDON EC1M 6EL**. Entry is £3 for IRRS members, £5 for non-members. There will usually be a sales table offering the latest books of Irish railway interest.

ZOOM MEETINGS Those on the London Area e-mail list will be sent links to join via Zoom. To be added to our e-mail list, please apply to irrslondon@hotmail.com. Zoom participants are invited to make a donation to the London Area through the link on the Home Page of our website (as above).

ZOOM only : 19.30 Friday 4 October 2024 "RPSI at 60" by Leslie McAllister

****** THIS MEETING STARTS AT 19.30 instead of the usual 18.00 ******

Tonight we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of the RPSI (on 30 September 1964). Leslie McAllister was one of the attendees at that inaugural meeting addressed by Lord O'Neill, and from 1972 to 1990 was the Society's London Agent, leading parties of British enthusiasts across the Irish Sea to enjoy the delights of main line steam travel in Ireland. This is an Exile's view, but Leslie travelled on many of the early tours and especially the Society's famous "Two Day" tours. The talk will cover those early tours in detail and then offer a history of the Society through the lives of its steam Locomotives and vintage coaches until today when it has an extensive, well-equipped Workshop and Museum at Whitehead. Log in tonight and share memories of a remarkable six decades of mainline steam and successes the Founders could not even have dreamt of!

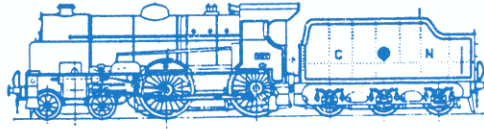
LIVE + ZOOM : Friday 8 November 2024 "North Kerry to East Cork" by Gerry McMahon

Gerry grew up in a railway family in in Munster and draws on his informed memories of the local railway system at the time. The talk covers many locations from Listowel to Youghal and in between with a few "divergences". It will include loose coupled goods; beet traffic; passenger specials; semaphore signalling, PWD work, a few odd locations including BnM railways and CSET (Irish Sugar Co) and a bit of steam. This is an update of previous talks using newly digitised boxes of slides. It shows the railway in the 1976 to 1982 period which was essentially a 1950's railway with diesel traction. It was also the period which saw the start of extensive modernisation.

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PROGRAMME 2024/25 (continued)

LIVE + ZOOM : Friday 22 November 2024

“Portlaoise Traincare Depot and the ICR Fleet” by Neil Dinnen

Neil is Intercity Fleet Controller, based at IE’s Laois Traincare Depot, home to the ICR fleet. Neil is responsible for controlling the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the ICR fleet, which provides the backbone of IE’s inter-city services as well as fulfilling a wider range of suburban and regional functions. Neil will describe the fleet, key issues that have arisen with it, lessons learned, the recent inclusion of extra coaches, and possible future fleet developments. He will explain how the trains are turned out for operation, day after day, and how they perform in service. The ICR fleet already has a worthy place in the history of Irish railways with many years of service yet to come.

ZOOM only : Friday 6 December 2024

“Off the beaten track - with David Soggee in Ireland 1958 – 1961” by Leslie McAllister + London Area AGM

David Soggee was a prolific, skilled and observant photographer of the transport scene. Leslie will present a selection of David’s Irish standard gauge photographs, mostly from the Republic but also covering the LMS(NCC) and the GN. David covered the latter days of steam, including the South Wexford line, the Kenmare Branch, the last days of the Cork Bandon and South Coast Railway and the MGWR branches – open and closed. He followed the 1961 Grand Tour, also venturing into Kerry (including the Valentia Line lifting train!) and to Achill. Some familiar locations and occasions, but seen through another lens and by a photographer who photographed “The Scene”. An eclectic mix, well worth a look!
followed by the London Area AGM at 19.45

LIVE + ZOOM : Friday 17 January 2025

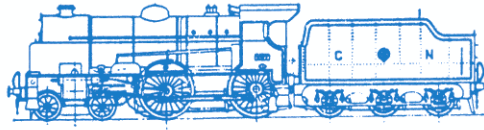
“Loughrea - The Last Branch Line” by Jonathan Beaumont

Railway historian and author, Jonathan Beaumont, describes the origins, construction and history of the Attymon Junction to Loughrea branch, closed in November 1975, the last traditionally-worked branch line in Ireland – or, indeed, much further afield. The Loughrea branch was one of the last locations where steam was in regular daily use before CIE steam finished in early 1963. Early dieselisation saw the diminutive “G” class locomotives used until the line closed, usually with the “C” class (in both Crossley and GM form) as companions. The talk should hopefully coincide with the launch of the author’s latest book on the subject.

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PROGRAMME 2024/25 (continued)

ZOOM only : Friday 21 February 2025

"Ballycastle and its Railway Station" by Mal McMichael

Mal McMichael is a local historian who has made a fascinating photographic study of Ballycastle Railway station, from long before it opened to the present day. His presentation looks at the way the station evolved over the 70 years of working life, why it struggled to be profitable and the inevitable closure. He shows lots of trains arriving and departing plus shunting, of course. He touches on the role of the railway line in the social life, economy and the development of the town. He also looks at some industrial archaeology and some interesting railway related sidetracks.

LIVE + ZOOM : Friday 21 March 2025

"1954 UTA Green Book – Justification for closing 16 railway lines?" by Jim Edgar

On 15 June 1954 four senior officials of the UTA and the GNR(B) presented a joint report to their employer, George B Howden, chairman of both companies. This report, referred to as "The Green Book", recommended sweeping changes to the operation of railways in Northern Ireland. While there are many positive recommendations, it was the proposal to close 16 railway lines that is well remembered, even today. These closures would leave large swathes of Northern Ireland without railways, and in due course were to bring about the end of the GNR(B). Jim will analyse and dissect the arguments put forward at the time and compare these with modern day transport decision making. There is sure to be a lively discussion afterwards.

LIVE + ZOOM : Friday 25 April 2025

"Maintaining the Irish Iron Road" by Andrew Waldron

Irish Industrial Railway expert, Andrew Waldron, presents this all-NEW talk illustrated with 200 B&W and colour images from his vast archive. He covers a journey through the building and maintenance of Irish railways, from the 1830s to today, from the Dublin and Kingstown Railway to today's re-building of the Foynes Branch. He describes how Ireland's Railways were built, and how they were maintained over the years, from human power to the most sophisticated On Track Plant. You will see contractors' locomotives and works scenes dating back over 130 years, and the machines used to maintain the lines since, from the humble plate layer's bogie to modern, high-tech equipment. A new topic for the London Area, described by Andrew as a "Talk Like No Other".

End of Programme