

Wednesday Lectures – Summer Term 2024

The lectures this term are being run as either Zoom or hybrid events, giving members the opportunity to attend either via Zoom, or apply for a limited number of pre-booked places to attend in person. The talks will be held in the Pink room here at Bridge Street. Places can be booked 7 days before each lecture and are open to members only. Zoom links are on the website (you will need to log in to access them) and will be included in the Bulletin each Wednesday on the day of the lecture. Lectures will start at 2.15 pm.

Any last-minute changes to the programme will be publicised in the weekly Bulletin.

17 April How fast is the Universe expanding? HYBRID

Speaker: Dr Matt Bothwell, Public Astronomer, Institute of Astronomy, University of Cambridge

Around a century ago, Edwin Hubble made one of the most important discoveries in astronomical history: the Universe is expanding. Today, astronomers are faced with a puzzle: why do different experiments disagree about how fast our Universe is expanding?

24 April Pierre de Coubertin: Founder of the Olympics ZOOM ONLY

Speaker: Tom Douglass, Marketer for the Olympics, who has attended all Games in the last thirty years

With the 2024 Olympic Games scheduled for Paris this summer, here's our opportunity to host a highly visual, fast-paced presentation exploring the life of Baron Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937), the visionary founder of the modern Olympic Movement. After France's humiliation in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, de Coubertin, a French aristocrat, writer, promoter and unabashed Anglophile, was determined to help guide France, and the world, toward a better 20th century. This is the second of our International Canadian Zoom Lectures.

1 May Lord Kelvin, First Baron of Largs: a Father of the Digital Age? HYBRID

Speaker: Professor Mark A Girolami, Sir Kirby Laing Professor of Civil Engineering, Cambridge University

Our digital era is hallmarked by breathtaking transformations and disruptions in all that we experience. The names of those at the forefront of this age include Sir Tim Berners-Lee, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, and, further back, Alan Turing, Claude Shannon, Ada Lovelace, and James Clerk-Maxwell. One name is missing: William Thomson, First Baron Kelvin. This lecture considers whether Lord Kelvin should be added to the list.

8 May The Legacy of the French Huguenots in England HYBRID

Speaker: Rosemary Hayes, Author and Writing Workshop Educator

In 1685, Louis XIV, revoked The Edict of Nantes which had protected French Protestants (Huguenots) for nearly 90 years. While many bent under the pressure, and converted to Catholicism, others fled, 50,000 to England. What skills did they pass on, and where did they live and worship? What is their legacy today?

**15 May Justice and Mercy - History and Role of the High Sheriff of
Cambridgeshire**

HYBRID

Speaker: Victor Lucas, U3AC member, and former High Sheriff

The Office of High Sheriff is the oldest secular Office in the United Kingdom, and dates from Saxon times. The word 'Sheriff' derives from 'Shire Reeve'. 27 clauses in Magna Carta relate to the Sheriff. This talk examines the history of this ancient Office, The Sheriffs Act of 1887, and the role of the High Sheriff today.