

PHOENIX RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION MEETINGS PROGRAMME January - June 2026

12th Jan ***Jane Morris*** - a talk by **John Hawks**

Jane Morris was the Pre-Raphaelites' icon, famed for many portraits by her lover Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Merton Abbey expert **John** reveals she was 'not just a pretty face', but highly talented in her own right.

9th Feb ***The South Norwood Plaques Trail*** by **John Hickman**

John is well-known to us for his research into and colourful descriptions of Norwood characters. Discover the stories of local residents who have been commemorated in the blue plaques of the area.

9th Mar ***To the Edge of the World: the Trans-Siberian Railway***
- a talk by **Christian Wolmar**

Journalist, railway historian and London Mayoral candidate **Christian** returns to tell us the dramatic story and impact of the world's longest and most famous railway line as only he can.

13th Apr ***Croydonopolis*** - a talk by **Will Noble**

"*Croydonopolis* tells the amazing story of this much-maligned town, whose only fault was to be too far ahead of the curve, and always go for broke." **Will** is the Editor of the popular *Londonist* website and lives in Croydon. This is his first book.

11th May ***Lest We Forget: War & Peace in 100 British Monuments*** -
a talk by **Tessa Dunlop**

Dynamic TV historian **Tessa** returns from an epic UK wide quest to uncover the dramatic human stories behind our memorials.

8th Jun ***US Presidents in Bits and Pieces*** - a talk by **Joe Mendell**

Hailing originally from Louisiana, **Joe** has spent most of his life in England but retains a strong interest in his native land, gaining quite a following here for his humorous and provocative American talks.

The Phoenix Retirement Association meets at **2 for 2.30pm** on the second Monday of each month at the Phoenix Community Centre in front of Sainsburys, Westow Street, Upper Norwood, London, SE19 3AF, offering quality illustrated talks, congenial company and tea and cake! Annual subscription £15; visitors welcome, fee £2 including refreshments.

PHOENIX RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION MEETINGS PROGRAMME July - December 2026

13th Jul ***Venetian River Fetes in Richmond*** - a talk by **Andrew George**
Spectacular river fetes with illuminations, fireworks and aquatic battles on the Thames lit up Victorian and Edwardian summer evenings, drawing huge crowds. **Andrew** shares his researches and asks if they can return!

10th Aug ***Three Notable Norwood Residents*** - a talk by **Stephen Oxford**
Upper Norwood's own local historian **Stephen** returns to tell us about three memorable local celebrities from times gone by.

14th Sep ***100 Years of the Northern Line*** - a talk by **Christian Wolmar**
The Underground opened its southern terminus near the little country village of Morden on 13th Sept 1926. *Subterranean Railway* author **Christian** returns to tell the heroic tale of how it reached there via the world's longest tunnel.

12th Oct ***Rail Fright*** – a performance by **George Hoyle**
As Halloween approaches, folk historian and story-teller **George** returns to tell us some eery tales of the railways.

9th Nov ***Henry Cole & the Christmas Card*** - a talk by **Alice MacDonnel**
Sir Henry's great-great-great-great-grand-daughter **Alice** tells us how he not only invented the Christmas card, but also played an important part in setting up the Crystal Palace and the V&A.

8th Dec **Christmas Party** – with a concert by the **Lewisham Mandolin and Guitar Group**

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