

Ledbury Probus Speakers for 2026

For General Distribution			
Date	Speaker	Subject	Summary
15/06/2026	Alistair Patrick	The Panama Canal	
22/06/2026	Max Hunt	William Morris	William Morris, later Lord Nuffield, was born in Worcester in 1877 and moved to Oxford as a child. A keen cyclist, he began building bicycles and later motorcycles. By the early 1900s, he ran a motor business in Oxford offering repairs, car hire, and taxi services. In 1913, he began producing cars, starting with the Morris Oxford, using bought-in parts. He adopted mass-production methods inspired by Henry Ford and built the Cowley factory in 1920..He launched affordable cars like the Morris Minor (1927), MG Midget (1929), and the first £100 car (1931). Known for spotting talent, he brought in Leonard Lord to modernise production and Alec Issigonis, who later designed the Mini. Though not an inventor, Morris was a skilled assembler and businessman who built one of Britain's top motor companies.
29/06/2026	Maybe Poetry Festival	No Meeting	No Meeting
Q3			
06/07/2026	Maybe Poetry Festival	No Meeting	No Meeting
13/07/2026	Cancelled	Cancelled	Cancelled
20/07/2026	Mike Aggleton	The Construction of the Great Pyramid of Giza	Historically we are told by Egyptologists that the Great Pyramid was built from cut blocks manually lifted into place.However in recent years the feasibility of this approach has been questioned .Modern science is applied to the blocks and concludes that alternative approaches were probably the answer.Not necessarily well received!

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Date	Speaker	Subject	Summary
27/07/2026	Allan Hunn	Andree Borrel - Pat O'Leary Escape Line & Pyrenees Evasion	Prior to serving with the SOE in WWII, Andree Borrel worked for the Pat O'Leary Escape Line. Andree operated two 'safe houses' for escapers & evaders in Canet Plage. In December 1941 Andree and her partner Maurice Dufour were advised to leave France due to the possibility of having been compromised by a traitor. Both Andree and Maurice made a remarkable evasion journey across the Pyrenees to Spain and Portugal to the UK. The talk covers Andree's activities working for the Pat O'Leary Line and walking her retraced route across the Pyrenees.
03/08/2026	Col. Andy Taylor (eastnor)	The Herefordshire Regiment in World War One	The Herefordshire Regiment in World War One – including a lead in from the Rifle Volunteers and the formation of the Territorial Force in 1908
10/08/2026	Richard Jeynes FRGS	Medieval Archers	TBA
17/08/2026	*Ivan Smart	What have the Romans ever done for us?	A light-hearted shameless race through two millennia of Art-History. We start on the streets of Rome, move through Florence and Venice into the lowlands of Germany, up through Europe and into Victorian England. We link the Imperial to the Renaissance to the Romantics to the Impressionists as we travel through the links to our share values and answer the question; What have the Romans done for us?
24/08/2026	Nigel Thompson	Brief History of Popular Music Part Two - The Renaissance of Swing 1946 through 1960	Looking at the Renaissance of Swing, and the greatest era of American songwriters and singers, such as Sinatra, Fitzgerald et al.
31/08/2026	Bank Holiday	No Meeting	No Meeting

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07/09/2026	Matt Johnson	PTSD to publication - a life on the thin blue line	Ptsd to publication - a life on the thin blue line
14/09/2026	Chris O'Grady	My walking Pilgrimage from Pershore, Worcestershire to Rome, Italy	The true, uplifting story of one man, four pairs of underpants, the 2,000 kilometers between Pershore & Rome and the extraordinary kindness of strangers received along the way. To walk.... from Pershore Worcestershire to Rome, to follow in the steps of countless pilgrims...well that is a special blessing.....
21/09/2026	Gillian Cane	A Girls Life in the Army	TBA
28/09/2026	*John Clarke	Buccaneer	TBA
Q4			
05/10/2026	*Woolfe van silver	Are you sure you know what thinking is?	TBA
12/10/2026	Dr SIR Timothy Brain	The Gloucestershire Regiment at the Imjin River 1951	TBA
19/10/2026	John Frankin	The WW2 Tank crisis	Tank development and manufacture was in chaos at the start of WW2. Having invented the tank, how did we get so far behind? At the very end of the war we had developed a tank that would be a world beater for nearly 20 years. The talk will trace the highs and lows of British tank development from WW1 to the present and consider who was to blame..
26/10/2026	* Dr David Kaner MBA	England's Water Crisis - A Very Personal Perspective.	David managed one of the largest suppliers of capital equipment to England's water and sewer companies. He will look behind the fog of political hyperbole and media frenzy to give his own views on how the English fell out of love with their water industry. He will keep well away from politics. Rather, he hopes to share a few insights, some of which may be just a little unexpected.
02/11/2026	Martyn "Zak" Coombs	Remembrance	War Graves, Poppy, Unknown Warriar etc Summary

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09/11/2026	*Andrew Beech	Why did trams disappear in England but thrive on the Continent	TBA
16/11/2026	Ash Jones (MBE).	David Niven: The ultimate gentelman	David Niven was a British actor, soldier, memoirist, and novelist. He was known as a handsome and debonair leading man in Classic Hollywood films. He received an Academy Award and numerous other accolades in his lifetime, but his life journey was anything but smooth. After a troubled childhood, he encountered many setbacks before finding his calling as a screen actor, but his flourishing career was almost ended by World War 2. In this enrichment lecture, we learn about Niven's path to success, as how even 40 years after his death in 1983, he is still regarded as the ultimate chap!
23/11/2026	Max Keen	Anglo Zulu War	https://www.keenhistorytalks.com
30/11/2026	Mike Warburton	A little known conspiracy and scandal at the very top of government	An exposure of a disgraceful but little-known scandal in the government of John Major involving Octav Botnar. He was one of the most remarkable men ever to have lived in this country, one of our greatest philanthropists and in many ways the saviour of our engineering industry. Even if you have heard about him you will almost certainly not know the true story, but I do
46363.00	Christmas Cracker	Christmas Cracker	Christmas Cracker
14/12/2026	Nigel Thompson	Brief History of Popular Music Part Three	More Swing, Blues and all that Jazz, with greater emphasis on the United Kingdom
21/12/2026	Christmas No Meeting	Christmas No Meeting	Christmas No Meeting
28/12/2026	Christmas No Meeting	Christmas No Meeting	Christmas No Meeting