

## The Trains I caught and the Trains I missed

This is an eight-hour presentation broken down into two four-hour episodes so you can have any part of it - or take a part at a time.....

## The Archaeology of the Cinema

How did people see films in the days before there were cinemas? Where were films screened between 1896 and 1910? And what were the films like?

## The British Documentary Tradition

This history of British film-making includes a strong documentary tradition—as described and illustrated in this talk.

## The Bearded Lady and the Living Skeleton

A look at the world of freak shows and curiosity shows that existed in a world where political correctness had not been invented. Such shows were a feature of the fair-ground until the 1950s—what do we make of it all now?

## Travel and Miscellaneous talks:

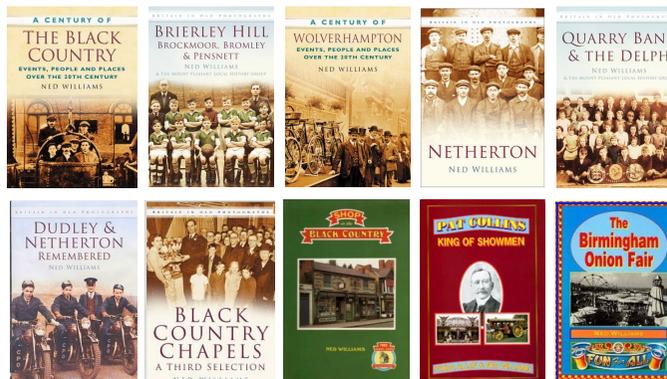
Egypt for the Elderly, America: Coast to Coast. Black Country Through the Lens, Black Country on Film, Postcard Britain etc etc....

## Courses and Workshops

I am willing to lead workshops or run short courses on a variety of topics including my listed "Talks", but also on other subjects such as:

- Oral History.
- Photographs as a historical source of information.
- The changing face of the Black Country.
- Writing and researching local history and /or community history.
- Creative writing.
- Small scale publishing.

And it may not seem to have much to do with the above, but I can also run courses on basic counseling skills.



## Fees

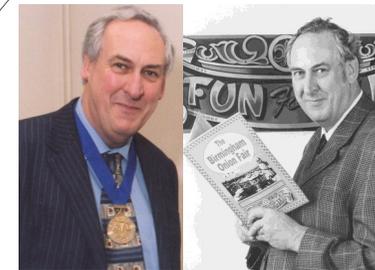
Fees can be a tricky subject! If you are asking me to come along and speak to a small audience for anything between an hour and two hours, my fee will be a minimum of £50. If you are asking me to speak to a large audience in a large hall, or undertake special preparation, I would appreciate a higher fee. If you are asking me to venture beyond the Black Country, we will need to negotiate some travel expenses.

## Ned Williams

23 Westland Road,  
Wolverhampton  
West Mids.  
WV3 9NZ

Telephone: 01902 773376 (Mealtimes are good time to call!)  
Weekends 0121 550 5943

Email: [nedwilliams@toucansurf.com](mailto:nedwilliams@toucansurf.com)  
[www.nedwilliams.co.uk](http://www.nedwilliams.co.uk)



## Ned Williams

Author and local historian Ned Williams has penned more than forty books about various aspects of the Black Country's past. His books cover the general social history of the region, plus specialised work on transport, retailing, urban architecture, and the entertainment world of cinema, theatre, the circus and the fairground. He has acquired a huge number of photographs, now used to illustrate his talks.

# Ned Williams

## TALKS

Perhaps you are looking for a speaker for your local society's programme. I have lived and worked in the Black Country for over forty five years and have always had a nosy interest in the area's past. I enjoy giving talks on a variety of subjects —sometimes with a marked Black Country bias, sometimes from a more "general" perspective. Talks are usually illustrated with slides and can usually be adapted to run for a duration to suit your requirements.

Here is a list of possible subjects:

### Railways of the Black Country:

Generally of interest to railway enthusiasts, but others have been tempted to try and understand the complexities of our local railway system.

### Looking at Shops:

With the aid of slides I can show you what there is to consider when you stop to view shops "historically", and "trade by trade", from corner shops to department stores.

### An Englishman's Home is his Castle:

A look at domestic architecture - both historically, and from the point of view of what the contemporary householder does with his house (Warning - some of the scenes shown can cause offence!)

### 100 Years of Cinema:

Using examples in the Black Country, and nationwide, this show traces the development of the cinema - not the films themselves, but the architectural environment in which we have viewed them.

### History with Dividends:

A look at over 150 years of history of the Co-op in Britain - the shops and the co-operative movement in general - from baking bread to brass bands.

### Pat Collins - King of Showmen:

The story of a Walsall-based showman - his life and the life of his fairgrounds - "all the fun of the fair"....

### Understanding the Travelling Funfair:

An introduction to complex world of the funfair - the shows, the rides and the candyfloss - focussing on the family lives of the people who present the fair.

### The Birmingham Onion Fair

The story of just one annual fair! (Not much to do with onions!) The fair was held in Aston from 1875 until 1968 - find out all about it.

### Here Comes The Circus

A survey of today's lively circus scene and a glimpse of circus history.

### Any Old Iron:

An illustrated journey through the world of architectural gems created in corrugated iron.

### Railways to Nowhere:

An account of unlikely railway journeys in remote parts of Queensland and Argentina.

### Tibet - 20th Century Tragedy

The story of two invasions of Tibet - the British in 1904 and the Chinese in 1950-62.

### We will entertain you!

An illustrated analysis of show business advertising over the years - the posters used to persuade you to come to the fair, cinema, circus or theatre.

### Black Country Chapels

A pictorial survey of non-conformist places of worship in the Black Country and the activities associated with them.

### Banner Bright:

A colourful survey of banners - trade union banners, Sunday School banners and Co-op banners, including scenes at Warrington Walking Day and Durham Miners Gala.

### The Archaeology of the Cinema

An illustrated account of how early examples of cinematography have now been unearthed to give us a picture of what was projected onto the screen between 1896 and 1910.

### Exploring Entertainment History

A personal account of how I have explored the history of cinemas, theatres, fairgrounds and circus over the past four decades....

### Entertainment History - area specific

So far I have presented talks on entertainment history in Wolverhampton, Tipton, Dudley and Bilston but I am willing to look at other places... the talks cover cinemas, theatres fairgrounds and circus entertainment.

### Palaces for the People

A look at the "prefabs" - prefabricated houses used during and after the Second World War to solve Britain's housing shortages.

### Alms Houses - a home for the poor

This talk looks at alms-houses to be found in the Black Country and then further afield.

### Boys and their Toys

A look at the history of constructional toys, trains and road vehicles—their design, their use and their ability to become "collectors' items.

[More talks overleaf....](#)