



Kent Showground, near Maidstone, Kent ▪ Saturday 1st April 2023
**Bringing together buses and coaches, old and new,
from across the South East and beyond**

The twelfth in a series of popular annual bus events at Kent Showground brought to you by the same organising team since 2011.

16th February 2023

SOUTH EAST BUS FESTIVAL GUEST SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED

Two guest speakers will be giving talks at this year's South East Bus Festival which is to be held on Saturday 1st April at Kent Showground near Maidstone, once again as part of Kent County Agricultural Society's Heritage Transport Show.

Reflecting the main theme of the event, the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Metrobus of Orpington company, one of its co-founders, Peter Larking, will give a talk on the history of the company which is now part of the Go-Ahead Group.

Having started from small beginnings with three local routes in the Croydon and Orpington areas, the company grew to cover other parts of Surrey, Sussex and Kent, taking on London Transport contracts from the mid-1980s and expanding in the Crawley area from 2001 when the company took over Arriva's operations based in that town.

Several preserved Metrobus vehicles have already been entered and these will form a display to commemorate the anniversary.

The second guest speaker will be Roger French, well-known throughout the bus industry for having been Managing Director of the Brighton & Hove Bus and Coach Company for many years and to readers of 'Buses' magazine through his regular column.

Roger also runs a popular and very interesting twice-weekly online blog (<https://busandtrainuser.com>) for which he travels the country by public transport to investigate a wealth of service developments on both the bus and the rail networks and his talk will be based around some of these experiences.

The talks will be given inside the showground's Clive Emson Conference Centre, where there will also be slide shows, a huge exhibition hall housing a wide variety of sales stands selling bus-related books, photos, videos and memorabilia plus

displays of model buses and the popular Reunion Tea Room.

Co-organiser Richard Lewis said “We are delighted that Peter and Roger have agreed to give talks at this year’s bus festival and we know that they will be very interesting for visitors to the event.

“Both have considerable experience of running bus companies over long periods of time and an enthusiastic dedication to the bus industry.”

Full information about the bus festival, including how to get there, how to enter a bus or coach, and details of the other activities that will be taking place on the day, can be found on the event’s website by visiting <https://southeastbusfestival.wixsite.com/sebf>.

Standard admission prices covering entry to both the South East Bus Festival and the Heritage Transport Show will remain at 2022 rates, those being £10 if booked in advance via the Kent County Agricultural Society website (<https://kcas.org.uk/heritage-transport-show/>) or £12 at the gate on the day.

Anyone between 5 and 13 years of age will be charged just £1 and four free admissions will be given to all buses and coaches entering the site. Under-fives will also be admitted free of charge. Children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by someone with a standard ticket.

To keep up to date with the latest vehicle entries and other news, or to ask questions about the event, people can visit the South East Bus Festival Facebook page at www.facebook.com/southeastbusfestival and click the ‘Like’ button to receive notifications of new postings.

Information about the Heritage Transport Show can be found at <https://kcas.org.uk/heritage-transport-show/>.

- Ends -

Note to Editors:

For media enquiries about the South East Bus Festival please contact Richard Lewis on 07521 772727 (Monday to Friday working hours) or email rolyg17@outlook.com.

Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/southeastbusfestival

Festival information is available at <https://southeastbusfestival.wixsite.com/sebf>

Heritage Transport Show information: <https://kcas.org.uk/heritage-transport-show/>.