

Café Scientifique Headingley

Monday 9th February 2026

"John Logie Baird and the Invention of Television".

By Iain Baird



Image: Royal Television Society

Outline: In recognition of the 26 January 1926 demonstration of a working television, this talk will include John Logie Baird's formative years in Helensburgh, Scotland, and what he did in his adult years before he began working on television. Most of it will focus on seeing and understanding the technology of early television with an emphasis on UK developments, including the Noctovision demonstration here in Leeds in 1927, as part of the British Association for the Advancement of Science Annual Meeting. Baird Television Limited's competition with Marconi-EMI to launch the BBC 'high definition' service will be clarified with reference to television developments in the US and Germany at the time. The wartime work by Baird on cinema and colour television will also be discussed. Time will be left for questions.

Speaker: Iain Baird, has worked primarily as a curator of television, providing expertise toward exhibitions and publications, having responsibility for large technological collections, and managing small to medium-sized curatorial teams. In 2007, he moved from Ontario, Canada to the UK to work as Curator of Television at The National Media Museum in Bradford. In 2011, he began expanding his curatorial repertoire into radio, photography, and cinematography. More recently, as well as writing numerous articles about television history, Iain has completed academic papers on feature film analysis, BBC television drama, music about early video games, and relationships between science and psychical research; speaking at academic and industry conferences on these subjects. He has worked as a freelance consultant for museums and as an Executive Director, Trustee, and Lead Curator across two multi-faceted heritage projects. Both of these are in Scotland. Iain is one of the grandchildren of John Logie Baird, the son of Malcolm Baird, and with his father he operates the website www.bairdtelevision.com.

Venue: The New Headingley Club, 56 St Michaels Road, LS6 3BG

Time: Room opens 7:30pm, Talk begins promptly at 7:45pm

Entry: Donation please for room hire and expenses: £4 at the door



Café Scientifique Headingley <http://cafesci.hdtleeds.org.uk/>

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