



Senman 2018

25th to 30th July 2018

Tour Manager: Chris Read



British Senate Tour to the Isle of Man - July 2018

Senators are invited to holiday "abroad" on the Isle of Man from Wed 25th to Mon 30th July 2018!

*The event is timed to coincide with the Manx Festival of Transport 2018 but it is **not** a rail enthusiasts' only tour - there is lots to do for those for whom trams and trains hold little fascination! The Isle of Man is full of Heritage sites and we will visit many of them during our tour, travelling by train, tram and private chartered coach. We are based at the excellent Mannin Hotel in Douglas (rated second best hotel in Douglas by Tripadvisor): <http://www.manninhotel.im/>.*

The trip is being organised for us by Great Rail Journeys Independent (GRJI) so we are able to take advantage of their local knowledge and buying power as the itinerary is similar to their Rail Discoveries public tour www.raildiscoveries.com/tours/isle-of-man-holiday/ but tailor-made for our Senators-only private group. Because Senators live in different areas, travel to and from the IoM hotel is not included. Flights are available from 11 airports in the UK (and Dublin) to Ronaldsway (IoM) and there are ferries from Heysham and Liverpool. Senators wishing to arrive a few days earlier or leave later can easily add extra days as required by booking them direct with the hotel (then please let me know).

Our (draft) itinerary (subject to hopefully only minor changes though days may swap!) is:

Wednesday 25 July

Arrival day - make your way to the hotel and meet for dinner - 5 nights in the Mannin Hotel on a bed, breakfast and evening meals basis (drinks other than water not included).

Thursday 26 July

Today we use our Heritage Explorer Pass for the first time to travel to the summit of the island's only mountain: Snaefell. We begin with a journey north along Douglas promenade to Derby Castle; we expect to travel by historic horse-drawn tram. The trams, known locally as 'toast racks', have been running since 1876 and remain a testimony to Victorian engineering, as popular today as they were when first introduced. We then board a Manx Electric Railway tram, travelling in the oldest working tramcars in the world, to take us to the fishing village of Laxey where we change onto the Snaefell Mountain Railway - the only electric mountain railway in the British Isles, dating from 1895. The journey takes us to the summit of Snaefell at 2,036ft. On a clear day you can see England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

We then return to Laxey, where you have time to explore. Separated into two parts, the main village and Old Laxey, which surrounds the picturesque tidal harbour, the town is home to the Laxey Wheel, the world's largest working waterwheel. The 'Lady Isabella' was built in 1854 to pump water from Laxey's lead and zinc mines. It is possible to climb the steep spiral staircase to view the working

wheel from the platform above. The wheel is one of the iconic images of the Isle of Man and to see it from above and in action is a fascinating experience. Return to Douglas by tram.

Friday 27 July

This morning we walk to Douglas railway station to board the Isle of Man Steam Railway, the island's oldest Victorian rail system. The steam-hauled journey in restored heritage carriages takes us through verdant countryside and along the stunning southeast coastline as we travel past small towns and old-fashioned fishing ports. The train pulls into the station in Port Erin, an imposing town set within a beautiful bay on the south-west point of the island. After time to explore, you are collected by private coach for a tour of the headland overlooking the Calf of Man. This terrific corner of the island is home to an array of delightful wildlife including seals and a wide variety of nesting birds.

After touring the headland we visit the National Folk Museum at Cregneash, which provides a living illustration of a farming and crofting community in the 19th and early 20th century. Then we travel to Castletown, the island's ancient capital. Castle Rushen, a magnificently preserved medieval fortress, dominates the town and merits a visit, as do the Nautical Museum and the Old House of Keys. Entrance to all three sites is included on the Heritage Explorer Pass. Return to Douglas by coach.

Saturday 28 July

Free day - precise programme will depend on Festival of Transport schedule. Train buffs might take another ride on the steam railway or take an IoM-organised vintage bus tour of closed railway lines and visit Groudle Glen Railway. Others can use the day to relax or explore more of the island using your Heritage Explorer Pass (which gives free public transport and free entry to most Heritage sites).

Sunday 29 July

Today we take the coach to Peel - an old-fashioned fishing port whose quaint, narrow streets lead to its deep harbour. On the way we call at Tynwald Hill, in the village of St John's, where you see the Church of St John and the Tynwald Exhibition. The Tynwald claims to be over 1,000 years old with the earliest records dating back to 1422. The museum charts the history of this fascinating political entity and proves a delight to discover. You then arrive in Peel. The thriving fishing industry and many smokehouses have made Peel famous for kippers. During our time here, you may wish to visit Peel Castle, located on St Patrick's Isle, which dates back to the 11th century, or the House of Manannan, a museum that explores the island's Celtic, Viking and Maritime heritage. We then pay a quick visit to the Transport Museum at Jurby before our coach transfers us to Ramsey, the norther terminus of the Manx Electric Railway for the journey back to Douglas. The railway is recognised as the longest narrow-gauge vintage railway in the British Isles, taking you on a 17-mile journey through glorious countryside, across gorse-topped hills and along the stunning coastline of the east coast on its way to Douglas

Monday 30 July

Free time until your journey home with optional morning visit to Manx Museum in Douglas.

*The cost of the trip is **£475** per person based on 2 sharing a twin or double room. **Not included** are your transport to and from the IoM (and arrival/departure transfers to the hotel), Heritage Explorer Pass (£55 in 2017), lunches and drinks with dinner.*

***We currently have just four double/twin rooms left!** Please e-mail Chris Read - chris@cwrr.co.uk if you need more details. To book, call Great Rail Journeys Independent on 01904 527200 (+44 1904 527200) quoting reference IND1262. The deposit is £100 per person (non-refundable) with the balance payable by 1 May 2018.*