The English-Speaking Union Central PA Branch and SU’s English, History, Math, Computer Science & Engineering, and Physics Departments present

“BRUNEL: THE MAN WHO CHANGED THE WORLD”

A talk by Robert Hulse, MA, Director, London’s Brunel Museum

Thursday, April 9, 2015 • 7:00 PM • Old Main Chapel

The Victorians’ favorite word for machines and engineering was “promethean” and the adjective suggests gigantic, world changing, world shocking design. Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-1859) was the quintessential promethean engineer who changed the world. His first project, London’s Thames Tunnel, is the birthplace of urban transport and has changed the very essence of the cities in which we live. To the Victorians, it was the eighth wonder of the world and on its opening day in 1843 was seen by 500,000 people. His last project, the huge ship the Great Eastern, changed trade and the shape of the world. In this talk, Robert Hulse will examine Brunel not only as visionary engineer, but also as showman and world changer. He will also introduce Brunel’s father, Sir Marc Isambard Brunel (1769-1849), who invented automated production, engineered the first canal in America, became an American citizen, and designed the defenses on Staten Island. Of Isambard Brunel, BBC broadcaster Jeremy Clarkson explained, “Brunel built Britain, and Britain built the world, which means Brunel built the world.”

Hulse directs London’s Brunel Museum, which is housed in Brunel’s original Thames Tunnel engine house and winner of The Queen’s Award in 2010. Mr. Hulse has worked in education and museums for 20 years and has taught and lectured at numerous universities in the United Kingdom and internationally. He is co-author of The Brunels’ Tunnel. He worked with the Greater London Authority to organize the first public walks through the Thames Tunnel in 145 years.

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