

LitHouses



*Literary Homes
and Museums
of Great Britain*

in association with:
Newstead Abbey
Historic House and Gardens
Newstead Abbey Park
Ravenshead
Nottinghamshire
NG15 8NA

“Interpreting Literary Houses and Their Collections”

The Third Annual LitHouses Conference
Wednesday 15th November 2006 10am - 5pm
Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire

Literary houses are uniquely placed as a category of historic houses and they face unique challenges with regard to the interpretation of their sites and collections. This conference investigates how writers' museums can more effectively communicate and interpret the lives and works of their authors. It explores some recent developments in the use of new media and other techniques aimed at attracting new readers and inspiring new writers.

The speakers come from a variety of backgrounds and all share a commitment to promoting interpretive good practice and innovation:

Jeff Cowton, Curator of Dove Cottage and the Wordsworth Museum, is working on a new temporary exhibition experimenting with ways of using the physical and emotive meanings of artefacts to lead new readers into 'classic literature, by stealth'.

Sarah Oswald is Projects Director at PLB Consulting Limited and a committee member of the Association for Heritage Interpretation. She outlines how, through evaluation and consultation, we can come to understand user and non-user perceptions and experience, learn how to improve that experience, ensure relevance and broaden the audience base for literary heritage.

Dr Ross Parry, Lecturer in the Dept. of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester, is interested in the relationship between new technology and the ways in which museums manage information and display knowledge. In this context he considers the role of narrative, the role of the authorial voice and text as well as the role of social software in empowering visitors to write and he reports on recent trials of 'live labelling'.

James Pardoe, Senior Lecturer in the Dept. of History and Archaeology at the University of Chester, is currently researching a comparative study of interpretation at places associated with five British Romantic writers.

Clare Perry, Regional Learning and Interpretation Officer for the National Trust, describes the dramatic transformation of Wordsworth House that won it a 2005 Interpret Britain Award.

Tony Seward, Chairman of the Trustees of The Cowper and Newton Museum, unveils the Museum's new Interpretation Plan, produced earlier this year with support from an HLF Project Planning Grant.

Dr Sheila Watson teaches in the Dept. of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. She is interested in the ways that history in museums contributes to identity, and how museums are spaces in which identities are made, controlled, reinforced and manipulated. She is currently researching how identity and a sense of place influence the ways in which visitors make meanings that are both personal and collective.

Members: Register via 2006 LitHouses Membership Renewal (two delegates free)

Non-Members: Send £20 to "Nottingham City Council" c/o the above address

More Information: Call 01623 455903 or email haideej@newsteadabbey.org.uk