



Lecture 26th May 2026

The Ark Dunlop Hall 10.45am



Writers and Relics – A Brief History of Literary Tourism

Every year, thousands of people visit sites associated with their favourite writers: graves, birthplaces, writers' house museums - even fictional settings. But what is it that makes us so interested in seeing where great literature began? Does seeing a grave or a birthplace, or even a lock of hair, bring us closer to the writer or the work? This fascinating lecture takes us on a journey through the history of literary tourism in the UK. Beginning in Stratford in the 18th century with the cult of Shakespeare, we move north to Scotland and then end with the founding of museums dedicated to Wordsworth, the Brontes and Jane Austen. Along the way, we learn about the people who've played their part in this history, including enthusiast collectors, custodians, literary pilgrims – even forgers!



Speaker: Annalie Talent



Following a career in teaching, Annalie spent several years working on education programmes at museums and literary houses across the UK, including the Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere; Wordsworth House in Cockermouth; Jane Austen's House in Hampshire; and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. At Jane Austen's House, Annalie won the Sandford Award for Excellence in Heritage Education; she also worked with the British Library, the Bodleian Library, and Chawton House Library in promoting Austen's work to young people. Annalie's lectures focus on aspects of Romantic and Victorian literature. She uses her knowledge and personal experience of literary houses - and their collections - to offer a unique perspective on writers and their works.