

PRESS RELEASE FROM CHAWTON HOUSE LIBRARY

17 September 2007

Madness, murder and tales of tragedy: a fascinating talk at Chawton House Library.

On Wednesday 26 September, **Dr Felicity James, University of Oxford**, will be giving a lecture at Chawton House Library about Mary Lamb, her relationship with her brother Charles, and their joint authorship of *The Tales from Shakespeare*, a re-writing of Shakespeare's works for children. 2007 marks 200 years since the publication of text, which has never been out of print since.

Eleven years before its publication, Mary Lamb, under increasing strain as the family's sole breadwinner and housekeeper, stabbed her mother to death in a fit of madness. After temporary confinement in an asylum, her brother Charles opted to care for her himself, saving her from prison.

In this talk, **Dr Felicity James** explores the stories behind the Lambs' re-readings of Shakespeare in light of their own experience of tragedy, and of their relationship, the special 'double singleness' of Charles and Mary.

Tickets for the lecture are £15 & £10 for friends/students, including wine and canapés. To book, please call 01420 541010 or email info@chawton.net

- ENDS -

Further information from:

Susie Grandfield, Public Relations Officer, on 01420 541010 or email

susie.grandfield@chawton.net

Helen Thirlway, Head of Fundraising, on 01420 541010 or email

helen.thirlway@chawton.net

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

Chawton House is a research library with a unique collection of books focusing on women's writing in English from 1600 - 1830. This specialist collection, set in the home and working estate of Jane Austen's brother, provides the opportunity to study and savour the texts in their original setting and inspires passion in readers of all ages. Chawton House Library is a registered charity (registration number 1026921)

Website: www.chawtonhouse.org