

# SPECIAL EXHIBITION



**Godmersham Park Heritage Centre**  
for the Parishes of Godmersham and Crundale Limited  
Registered Charity 1123575

## Jane Austen's Reading at Chawton and Godmersham Park

This exhibition represents a unique opportunity to see a selection of books that Jane Austen was reading or re-reading between 1809 and 1817, the most productive years of her literary career. A key attraction will be an entire case of books originally from the Godmersham Park Library belonging to Austen's brother Edward Austen, later Edward Knight. These books are now housed at Chawton House Library in Hampshire. Along with the handwritten library catalogue for 1818, the books are returning to Godmersham for three days only.

These precious books – all early and first editions, and in some cases the exact copies we know Austen read – can be viewed at Godmersham Park Heritage Centre on:

October 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> between 10am and 4pm  
Admission £5, includes exhibition and catalogue

### - Special Event -

Available by advanced booking only, On Saturday October 9<sup>th</sup>, between 10am and 12noon and again between 2pm and 4pm a series of three talks, each of 20 minutes will be provided by:

Gillian Dow  
University of Southampton and Chawton House Library

Jennie Batchelor  
University of Kent

Katie Halsey  
University of Stirling

**See over leaf for details**

### Jane Austen and the library at Godmersham Park

On a visit to her brother Edward at Godmersham Park in October 1813, Jane Austen wrote one of her frequent letters to her sister Cassandra. Providing the minutia of her daily life at Godmersham, she seemed particularly pleased that the attractions of the billiard table for the gentlemen after dinner ensured that 'my Br Fanny & I have the Library to ourselves in delightful quiet'. In this talk, Gillian Dow, of the University of Southampton and Chawton House Library, will explore the library at Godmersham Park, revealing the books that Austen would have encountered there on her visits to Kent.

### The Austens and their Pocket Books

When Catherine Morland is about to be launched into her 'six weeks' residence in Bath', her understandably anxious mother arms her with 'cautions' and a 'little book' in which to keep account of her spending. Little does Mrs Morland know that this little book - a pocket-book - will be used by Catherine to list her favourite horrid novels. In this talk, Jennie Batchelor, from the University of Kent, will offer a brief history of pocket books - an enduring if wonderfully contradictory type of publication - and discuss some of the ways they were read and used by the Austens.

### Jane Austen's Readers

Generations of readers have read and loved Austen's novels and in this talk, Katie Halsey of the University of Stirling will discuss what her books have meant to readers over a wide historical period - from 1811 to 1945. "Jane Austen" does not, of course, mean the same thing to every reader, and this talk will explore some of the range of significations, private and public, that her name took on in the long nineteenth century.

**The talks on Saturday October 9<sup>th</sup>, will take place in the lecture room at the mansion, Godmersham Park, admission by advance ticket only. Ticket price £15, includes admission to either the morning or the afternoon series of talks, tea/coffee, catalogue and viewing of the books on any of the three exhibition days.**

**For tickets to the talks, contact: Godmersham Park Heritage Centre  
E: [heritagecentre@btconnect.com](mailto:heritagecentre@btconnect.com) T: 01227 732 272 specifying am or pm**