

# Local Mansions and Country Estates Programme

## Location

Part one: Wivenhoe House, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex

Part Two: Marks Hall Lost Mansion Site, Coggeshall, Essex

Date: Saturday 13 July 2013

Time: 10:30am-6pm

## Theme

The conference will offer a broad historical context for the destruction of great houses in modern Britain, asking questions about the causes of their loss, the representation of lost mansions and estates at the time of their disappearance, and contemporary resurgent interest in the 'great estate'. At issue will be the nature of 'heritage', the relevance of conservation, and our understanding of proprietorship and estate management in times of social, political and economic transformation. What was the place of the great house in local society, politics and economy, and how does this relate to the popular romanticisation of the great house from Brideshead to Downton?

## Part One at Wivenhoe House, University of Essex, Colchester

10:30 Registration and welcome over coffee (Prof. James Raven)

10:45 -11.45 Session 1: **Irish Mansions**

Terry Dooley (National University of Ireland, Maynooth): 'The disappearance of Irish country mansions, 1879-2013.'

Ian d'Alton (Co. Kildare, Ireland): 'An aesthetic of living: Bowen's Court, Co Cork, and its significance in the imagining of the Irish gentry'

(short break)

11:45 -12:45 Session 2: **Rescue & Ruin**

Christopher Ridgway (Castle Howard Estate, Yorkshire): 'Castle Howard: Lost and Saved'

Michael Davis (West of Scotland): 'Better Off As Ruins? The Scottish Castle Restoration Debate'

12:45 Lunch

13:15 – 14:45 Session 3: **The Country Estate & General Loss**

Jon Stobart (University of Northampton): 'Lost Aspects of the Country Estate'

Barbara Wood (National Trust, South West Region): 'The loss of country houses and estates through the destruction and obscuring of identity'

John Harris (1975 Exhibition Organiser, London): 'Empty Country Houses & the Destruction Exhibition in 1975'

Author W.M. Roberts will be signing copies of his book 'Lost Country Houses of Suffolk' during the Registration and Lunch periods at the University.

## **Part Two at Marks Hall, Coggeshall**

- 14:45 Coach(es) to Marks Hall (Assembly point: outside the main entrance to Wivenhoe House)
- 15:15 Arrival and Tea at Marks Hall Visitor Centre
- 15:30 James Raven (University of Essex): 'The Lost Mansion of Marks Hall'
- 16:00 Tour of the Marks Hall mansion site & estate
- 17:00 Return to the Marks Hall Visitor Centre for Open Discussion session  
(Additional refreshments; shop will remain open)
- 18:00 Coach(es) back to University