Landscape, Ancient Monuments and Memory in Early Modern Britain.

Greg Dening Lecture

Professor Alexandra Walsham
Professor of Modern History, University of Cambridge

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the landscape of the British Isles was littered with mysterious remnants of the prehistoric past: stone circles, chambered tombs, and standing stones. This lecture explores the evolution of early modern ideas about the origin, function and significance of these monuments. It considers how attitudes towards the partly natural and partly man-made physical environment were shaped and transformed by the profound theological upheavals associated with the Protestant Reformation and by intellectual and cultural developments that fostered a growing fascination with the early history and archaeology of Britain and Ireland. Then, as now, people perceived and interpreted the landscape through the prism of their own moral and spiritual values and social and political preoccupations. The lecture will assess the critical importance of the physical environment as a critical agent in the formation of historical memory and cultural identity.

Alexandra Walsham is a graduate of the Universities of Melbourne and Cambridge. She taught at the University of Exeter for many years, before taking up her current appointment as Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge in 2010. She is a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and of the British Academy. She has published widely in the religious and cultural history of early modern Britain. Her most recent book, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford University Press, 2011) won the Wolfson History Prize and the American Historical Association’s Leo Gershoy Award.

Professor Walsham is a Faculty of Arts Visiting Scholar at the University of Melbourne and her visit is also supported by the ARC Centre for the History of Emotions.

Tuesday, 28 August 2012
6.30pm – 7.30pm
Theatre A
Elisabeth Murdoch Building
The University of Melbourne
PARKVILLE VIC 3010

Admission is free. Bookings are required. Seating is limited.

To register visit: http://alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/
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