

Edinburgh Literary Tour launches day time tours



The Scottish Literary Tour Trust Ltd has launched a day-time version of its award-winning evening Edinburgh Literary Pub Tour aimed at families and children among others.

“As we fast approach our 20th anniversary of literary projects in Edinburgh and other parts of Scotland, we felt it was high time that we created a version of the tour that would embrace families and a younger audience,” says Morris Paton, founder and managing director.

Many of the tour’s prospective clients are below the legal age to enter pubs in the evening – but day-time access will give them the opportunity. Other potential tour-goers might also prefer to attend during the day.

The Trust recently has been reinvigorated with a newly appointed Board of Directors, including The Edinburgh Makar, Ron Butlin, who will act as series-editor across an ambitious and broad-ranging programme of literary tour developments in Edinburgh and elsewhere in the year ahead.

“Without giving too much away,” says Paton, “we are currently on our third working script, evolved over the last ten years, to create an up to date and lasting tribute to The Makar’s Literary Court, Scotland’s only National Monument to its great writers and poets.

“It would only be fitting if the definitive dramatic script, (produced both with visitors and students of Scottish Literature in mind), is written by the longest serving Edinburgh Makar, Ron Butlin. It’s going to be a very exciting partnership for us, and an honour to be working with a writer

of such calibre.”

The Scottish Literary Tour Trust also has struck a new strategic partnership, between Edinburgh Napier University, Queen Margaret University’s acting course and banking group Santander’s internship programme.

A matched funding agreement allows students and post-graduates to gain invaluable experience in a professional working environment at professional rates. “This is a dynamic partnership which enables us to introduce new talent and energy to our literary endeavours efficiently and effectively for a three-month period. Similar to the focus and demands of any repertory theatre company,” says Paton, “the new actors will be working across existing scripts and assisting with the development of others, through workshops and improvisation.”

Paton has always been an advocate of the importance of blending the disciplines of theatre practice with a strong emerging tourism industry, since the early days of the launch of The Edinburgh Literary Pub Tour in 1996, when it won The Scottish Thistle Award for Arts and Tourism

“Nowadays the talk is more of cultural tourism and its socio-economic impact on an ever more competitive sector, whether regionally, nationally or globally. The Trust’s role has always been to promote Scottish writing and literature to the widest possible audience,” Paton points out.

“The fact that along the way we’ve seen the emergence of a new ‘Scottish Literary renaissance’ and the creation of Edinburgh as the world’s first UNESCO City of Literature, reinforces The Trust’s pioneering spirit, which has always somehow managed to survive autonomously, irrespective of current funding trends and the wider political scene.” Paton believes there will always be stories to tell, but how they are told makes the difference. “Professionally trained actors are the obvious cyphers of choice, within this hitherto niche sector and will

do much to raise the bar and inform the visitors' cultural experience of Scotland'" he concludes.

Tour information

The new day-time Edinburgh Literary Pub Tour is now running from its prestigious new base at The Hub, home to The Edinburgh International Festival and a lively "watering hole" for visitors and culture vultures alike at the top of The Royal Mile!

Day-time departures are: Noon & 2pm from The Hub, at the top of The Royal Mile. Tickets available directly from The Hub Box Office or from

www.edinburghliterarypubtour.co.uk