

Looking back at Christie's Imperial Hotel

Torquay and South Devon are intimately linked with Agatha Christie both as a person and as a writer and many local places such as Kents Cavern and The Pavilion make an appearance in her novels.

One of the iconic buildings featured in her books is The Imperial Hotel where Agatha regularly attended many social functions.

In 'The Body in the Library', Miss Marple is found at the hotel that is masquerading under the name 'The Majestic'.

When Miss Marple is explaining how she was able to uncover the murderer's identity in 'Sleeping Murder', she's again sitting on the terrace of The Imperial.

Under the pseudonym 'The Majestic', The Imperial is also found in 'Peril at End House'.

In this book, Torquay is called St Loo, the 'Queen of Watering Places'. This time, however, it is Hercule Poirot and his friend

VERONIKA VALIGURSKÁ
Torquay Museum

Hastings who visit the hotel and meet Miss Buckley, who lives at End House 'a tumble-down old place' overlooking the hotel.

The 'End House' in the book was in reality based on a real house called 'Rock End'. Agatha's description of the fictional house and its setting almost exactly matches the real house.

There is much more information about the life and work of the world's most famous crime writer at Torquay Museum, which has the only permanent exhibition about Agatha Christie in the UK.

This tells her story through amazing images from the family archive and a growing collection of more than 700 items of books, memorabilia and props.

Highlights on display include original manuscript items on loan



from the Christie Archive Trust, costumes worn by David Suchet as Poirot and Joan Hickson as Marple, the set of Poirot's office from the ITV series and Poirot's swan cane on loan from David Suchet.

The museum is also home to regular Agatha Christie events, one of which will take place in November so keep an eye on the museum's website and social media. The museum's shop also has an extensive range of unique Christie merchandise, books and prints.



Top, The Imperial Hotel with Rock End on the right

Above, inside The Imperial Hotel

Left, the terrace where both Miss Marple and Poirot sat in the Agatha Christie novel Sleeping Murder

Pictures: TORQUAY MUSEUM

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