



ANCESTRAL TOURISM CASE STUDY

IAN WALKER

BORDERS JOURNEYS, TOUR OPERATOR



Introduction

Tour operators are a key component within the ancestral tourism industry. They play an important role in connecting the local community and its knowledge to archive services and genealogists, creating the best possible experience for visitors seeking to experience the lives of their ancestors. Ian Walker, from Borders Journeys, is a successful tour operator with many happy customers. With specialist knowledge of the Scottish Borders, he designs bespoke tours for visitors to provide them with a trip of a lifetime.

Support offered to tourists

Ian provides research advice to clients as well as researching their Scottish ancestry on their behalf. On completion of his research, he prepares a comprehensive ancestral report detailing his findings. His research informs how he designs a tailor-made ancestral tour for each client, taking them on a journey of discovery where they will connect with their Scottish ancestors by walking in their footsteps.



"Our tour was tailor made for us, and we found it to be a perfect blend of ancestral tour and a wonderful tour of this beautiful country."

- Lyn & Peter

"Ian has provided us with a wonderful experience and helped to make special memories that will last a lifetime for us"

- Betty, Renae & Becky

Support offered to the local economy and local tourism businesses

As well as providing an ancestral service, Ian provides private sightseeing tours through Scotland. During his tours, Ian supports many local businesses – guest Houses, B&Bs, visitor attractions, bars, restaurants, tea rooms, and shops. Ian prefers to support the local businesses as much as he can. Ian's work also enhances other tourism businesses through partnership and support. Ian regularly works with local archives, libraries, family history societies and researchers. Many researchers do not offer an ancestral tour service and are happy to pass their clients onto Ian.



Rewards and Successes

Ian notes that one of the main challenges of ancestral tourism is managing the expectations of visitors, especially regarding family legends about their ancestry. These challenges are diminished in significance when considering the rewards and successes of ancestral tourism. Ian finds his profession humbling, taking clients to places associated with their ancestors, especially when his party manage to locate a headstone or a family home.

One of Ian's most memorable stories is the time he took a group of clients to take a photograph of their ancestral farm. The farm was no longer in the family; however, the current farmer invited the ladies to meet his mother. The farmer's mother proceeded to give the ladies a tour of the farmhouse then offered them tea and homemade cake in the very kitchen where their ancestors cooked and ate. An ancestral journey which Ian felt truly privileged to be part of.

To find further details about how you can engage with ancestral tourism, please visit the Ancestral Tourism Resource Section on our website [here](#).

"It's been very good to get a sense of where our family lived on our 'roots' journey. We love Scotland! Thanks so much for keeping track of all of the history."

- Ginny, Cathy, & Jim

"Simply being in the areas where our ancestors lived in the early 1800s was so satisfying and following the route of our great grandparents took in 1901 was so interesting to us."

- Janet