

# Letter from Chicago

Winter 2015

## Luncheon

Sunday, February 8, 2015  
Noon to 3 pm

Marcello's Lincoln Park,  
645 W. North Avenue, Chicago IL 60610  
Parking Available

Talk by Kim Wilson, JASNA-Wisconsin,  
Author of *At Home with Jane Austen*



“Gilpin, the Picturesque, and Dr. Syntax”



### LUNCHEON REGISTRATION FORM

Members: \$40; Guests: \$50

Registration deadline: February 4, 2015

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### You can register by

1. Going online to [www.jasnachicago.org](http://www.jasnachicago.org) and pay using your Visa or MasterCard.
- or
2. Mailing your check—payable to JASNA-GCR—and this form to Russell Clark, 4020 N. Damen, Apt. 405, Chicago, IL 60618.

Jeffrey Nigro



## Living in Jane Austen's World

For the past few years, lovers of Jane Austen have been enjoying the bicentenaries of her novels. The festivities really began in 2009, when we observed the anniversary of the Austen

women's move to Chawton, marking the beginning of the novelist's most creative period. The celebrations of the novels themselves began in 2011, when we honored Austen's first published novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, followed by the anniversaries of the perennially beloved *Pride and Prejudice* in 2013, and the complex and challenging *Mansfield Park* this past year. We can look forward to the bicentenaries of *Emma* and of the posthumously published *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* in upcoming years.

With no specific novel to celebrate in 2015, we can enjoy—to borrow a phrase from the college/university phase of our lives—a “gap year”. The anniversaries have been not only festive, they have given us all a

chance to reread and rethink our favorite literary masterpieces. This year, though, we can look back on Austen's lifetime in a different way. The JASNA AGM this coming October, hosted by the Louisville Region, is called “Living in Jane Austen's World”, a theme that gives us the opportunity to put Austen's novels into their historical context.

The AGM region and theme form a perfect match: as many of you know, the Louisville Region hosts a popular annual Jane Austen Festival. Our own Lori Davis wrote all about the good time she had at the Louisville festival in the Fall 2013 issue of *Letter from Chicago*: a whirlwind of country dancing, horseback riding, archery, and a chance to live Regency life at its most enjoyable.

The “enjoyable” part can cause some grumbling from non-Janeites who accuse us Austen lovers of wallowing in dreamy nostalgia, viewing a complex era through the proverbial rose-tinted glasses. In fact, Janeite nostalgia is nothing new: people have been looking back on Regency Britain with misty eyes at least since the late 19th

## LETTER FROM CHICAGO

Published by the Greater Chicago Region of the Jane Austen Society of North America

Jeffrey Nigro, Regional Coordinator; Sara Okey, Editor; Lori Mahoney, Editorial Consultant; Kathleen Burke, Designer

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**JASNA-GCR**

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century. As more and more people went to live in industrialized cities and towns, the country villages Austen depicts came to be seen as idyllic refuges from the stresses of modern life.

Yet true Austen lovers know that her novels are not straightforward snapshots of a more serene and innocent era; they are superbly crafted works of art, in which realism and idealism are perfectly balanced. On the surface, Austen's novels may barely hint at some of the less pleasant aspects of Regency life: grinding poverty for much of the population, public hangings, not to mention the Napoleonic Wars. Just scratch a bit, though, and the realities become more apparent. Austen herself may blithely claim to assign "odious subjects" to "other pens", but no one could accuse her of prettifying the precarious economic situation of the Bates women in *Emma*. Authors of the best Austen-inspired fiction understand the

complexities hidden in Austen's offhand remarks: as Jo Baker reminds us in her excellent novel *Longbourn*, there is more to the flogging of a private than simply a bit of gossip to entertain the more frivolous Bennet sisters.

JASNA-GCR will do our best to examine the gamut of Regency life in our programming, although like Austen herself, we want to accentuate the positive. Critics of Janeite whitewashing often miss the point of nostalgia: with all that's going on in the world, who wants to get together with Austen-loving friends to "dwell on guilt and misery"? Our celebration of Austen's world begins with the Winter Meeting on February 8. For further details, see the cover of this newsletter and Debra Ann Miller's Program Director Letter on page 4. Join us as we explore Jane Austen's world in 2015 (rose-tinted glasses optional).

# Members

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## New Members

Marilyn Baker-Buffington  
Amy Koester  
Anna Miller  
Karen Miller  
Diana Morgan  
Brenda Rossini  
Elsa Statzner  
Colette Verdun

Courtney Vukasinovic  
Deborah Weston  
Martha Kaempfe and Dayvid Schultz have expanded their membership into a family membership

## Thank You to Our Generous Donor

Corinne McArdle

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## No-Refund Policy Instituted

The JASNA-GCR Board recently instituted a no-refund policy. This policy is in keeping with practices at other cultural and educational organizations in our area.

The JASNA-GCR Board organizes programs that are as enjoyable as they are enlightening; and the positive comments we receive from members indicate that our efforts are appreciated. We know that situations do arise and sometimes members aren't able to attend a particular program for which they have paid a registration fee.

We are happy to send you a contribution acknowledgement letter for tax declaration purposes if you would like your non-refundable and unused registration fee to become a contribution to JASNA-GCR. Please contact JASNA-GCR via email ([info@jasnachicago.org](mailto:info@jasnachicago.org)) or by U.S. mail requesting the contribution acknowledgement.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

# Programs

2012 was the 200th anniversary of *Sense and Sensibility*; 2013, the year of *Pride and Prejudice*; 2014, the bicentenary year of *Mansfield Park*. 2015... The year of...intermission; calm before the celebratory storm of *Emma*; or worse, the year of nothing? Oh goodness, no! I propose 2015 as not only the year of the AGM's broad theme of "Living in Jane Austen's World", but specifically the year of Jane Austen herself. For the members of JASNA-GCR, 2015 will be anything but a dull intermission.

We officially begin our year of *Living in Jane Austen's World* on February 8th with Jane Austen as the observer of terrestrial and human nature. **Kim Wilson**, who through her own books has invited us to walk *In the Garden with Jane Austen* and to take *Tea with Jane Austen* will present **Gilpin, the Picturesque, and Dr. Syntax**. Jane had much to say about the picturesque, natural beauty and landscape improvements; and through the subject of "improvements" she gives us insight into her characters that observe, aspire to and achieve them. Ms. Wilson's presentation promises to be a visual feast for our winter-weary souls.

After our Winter Meeting, it is just a hop through the rest of sunless February, a skip over unpredictable March and a jump through the puddles of rainy April, to May 2 and 3rd and our annual Spring Gala. This year we are extending the festivities over two days. Our official Gala presentations and emporium will take place on Saturday, May 2nd at the beautiful Woman's Athletic Club of Chicago. Our featured presenter will be **Janine Barchas**, author of *Matters of Fact in Jane Austen: History, Location, and Celebrity*, and curator of the website *What Jane Saw*, a virtual reconstruction of the British Institution exhibit of the works of Joshua Reynolds that was held in the Institution's galleries in Pall Mall in 1813. Professor Barchas will be speaking to us about this groundbreaking exhibition and its influence upon Jane

## Debra Ann Miller, Program Director

Austen, her writing, and her world. Austen seems to have immersed herself in the arts whenever she visited London; and if her letters are any indication, her most frequent indulgence was the theatre. In addition to exploring the art that Jane saw, the Gala will salute some of the plays she saw and enjoyed.

On Sunday, May 3rd we will conclude our Gala festivities with, appropriately, an optional group visit to the theatre, namely to Chicago Shakespeare Theatre's presentation of *Sense & Sensibility*. This world premiere musical from Tony Award-nominated composer Paul Gordon was specially commissioned by CST for its 2014/15 Season. Our resourceful Regional Coordinator Jeff Nigro has secured a block of tickets for us at a group rate, so please reserve your seats through JASNA-GCR. Complete registration information will be forthcoming via email, and forms will also be available at the February 8 Meeting.

But what of "the year of Jane herself", and after an enlightening year devoted to reading and rereading *Mansfield Park*, what will we read this year? I thought you'd never ask. I suggest reading Jane Austen's existing letters. Witty, touching, sometimes snarky; her letters to family, friends and roguish publishers are an intimate look into the real world of Jane Austen. The most complete collection is edited by Deirdre Le Faye and available at libraries and bookstores and the original collection of 1884 edited by Lord Brabourne is available for free on the Republic of Pemberly website. I cannot say enough about this precious collection of correspondence. Please read them, or resolve to walk 2.8 miles everyday (the round trip from Chawton Cottage to the site of Henry Austen's bank in Alton), or learn to make Orange wine, or at the very least check our JASNA-GCR Facebook page for the Talk Like Jane Austen Quote of the Day. Whatever you choose to do, have a happy, healthy 2015 and I look forward to seeing you all in February.

## Quilting with Jane Austen

In the summer of 1988, a group of Janeites gathered at the Wild Goose Chase quilt gallery on Wells St. to work on a replica of a quilt Jane Austen made with her mother.

It was a motley group, young and old, with various levels of education and knowledge about Jane Austen and about quilting, the youngest being my six-month-old baby, who of course was not able to contribute to the actual sewing but provided some comic relief. My ten-year-old stepdaughter also participated in a small way. It was the first time she had ever sewed.

The piecing and quilting were the last stages of a process of design, cutting and assembly that had begun many months before. **Marilyn Packard**, the owner of Wild Goose Chase, refused to let anyone stitch on the quilt until they had demonstrated that they actually could sew, using for practice a piece of an old quilt set up on a freestanding embroidery hoop. On the day I passed the test, she casually mentioned that the piece I was sewing on was over 100 years old. I was aghast. "How can you let people just practice on a 100-year-old quilt?" I asked. She replied, "Because I have lots of 100-year-old quilts!"

And she really did. Set up in one corner of the shop was a bed with many quilts layered on top. Most of these were from the Victorian era and they represented a wide variety of colors, textures and sewing styles. My favorites were the crazy quilts made of patches of varying shapes, often in deep tones of velvet or silk. Some of the other items in the quilt shop were more contemporary. There were wall-hung quilts in a free-form style, machine-quilted, which looked almost like landscape paintings. There were also several small quilts made of simple squares. Marilyn explained that these were done by a young Amish boy who, seeing his sisters making money by

quilting, wanted to get into the act to earn a little cash. His quilts were very simple in design, but with pleasing color combinations. The shop also had some antique toys, such as threadbare teddy bears and china-headed dolls.

As we worked, we talked about quilting and Jane Austen. According to some historians, Jane Austen did not really get along well with her mother. We speculated on whether the project was tense or perhaps a healing agent in their relationship. The rhythm of any handicraft is soothing and centering, and though it is nice to talk while you work, it is also possible to work in a silence which can be comfortable, not necessarily awkward. Some people admired the design and fabrics of the quilt; others found it busy or overly fussy. In the end, though, the real point was the sense of connection we found in working in a medium and on a project that our beloved Jane Austen had sewed so many years ago.

There was some history to the Jane Austen quilt before I became involved with the project. Apparently the pattern found in researching Jane Austen's quilt had some kind of mathematical flaw and it was felt it would not work. Perhaps it had been a copying error; no one knows for sure. However, the fabrics were purchased, from the same manufacturer that some of Jane Austen's original fabrics had come from, and the quilt was cut out. In the process of putting it together, some changes were made along the way, primarily by **Karen Frederickson** and **Pat Latkin**, so it would fit together. It struck me that perhaps the error had always been there and the original quilters had the same problem, and worked it out in the same way, making it up as they went along. It was and is, after all, folk art. Perfection was never the point.

The pattern featured diamond-shaped pieces of various sizes in a lattice pattern,



with a border of tiny diamonds four rows deep and a central medallion, also diamond-shaped. The medallion was an image of a flower basket and the smaller pieces echoed the floral pattern. The colors of the flower motifs were cream, green and a sort of peach or salmon, and the border fabric was cream with tiny pink dots. If you see the photograph of the original quilt, which is on permanent display at Chawton House, you will notice some colors have faded, while others are considerably darker than those in our replica, due to deterioration of the dyes over time.

The piecing was done according to the method used on the original Austen quilt. The tiny diamonds were lined with newspaper; the seam allowances, which if

memory serves were ½ inch or less, were folded under, and the pieces were whip-stitched together over both folds on the wrong side. Then the stabilizing paper was carefully torn away. The Jane Austen quilt was not technically a quilt at all but a coverlet, with the pieced top and backing fabric sewn together only at the edges. We made our replica a quilt with a thin layer of batting in the middle.

Because many of the quilters could not spare much time during the day, piecing “kits” in the form of diagonal rows of the quilt were sent home with various participants. When the assembly of these portions of the quilt began, it was found that one of the largest diagonal rows was missing. More fabric had to be ordered and the missing section recreated.

By this time, later in the summer, we felt a bit of pressure, under a sort of deadline, because the quilt was to be featured in an article in *Threads* magazine, and we were working towards a date on which someone from *Threads* wanted to see and photograph the quilt. Because of the tight schedule, it was agreed that once again we would send a few sections of piecing home. I took one of these sections home myself one night, with high expectations, but then I developed a monster migraine, brought on, I think, by a big storm that was coming through Chicago. I did my best but did not get much done that evening. Though they were polite about it, I think my co-quilters were disappointed, and I remember working as fast as I could the following day, which was rainy and dark, to make up for what I had not done the night before.

Eventually we realized that even though the quilt itself could not be finished by the deadline, we could get the top done, which would be just as good for the purposes of a photo shoot. The top was finished and professional fabric steaming equipment

was brought in to give it a nice smooth look. The quilt was hung on a wooden stand with plastic around on the floor and surrounding area to protect it from dust and handling. I remember the photo shoot seemed to take a very long time, going into the evening though most of us had to leave before it was finished. The finished article was only a short piece and after all our hard work, the photo that was published was of a small section of the quilt with someone's hands positioned as though they were sewing. Still it was an honor to be featured in such

a prestigious magazine in the sewing and fiber arts community.

Care is taken to preserve the quilt in an archival fashion. It has been displayed several times. It is hung so that the back as well as the front can be seen, and it is fun to spot the names of the quilters, which are embroidered on the back, and remember that summer. It was an ambitious project to be done with volunteer labor, a testa-

ment to what it means to Janeites to be connected with history and literature in a hands-on, personal way.

## Outings for the GCR "Jane Austen Legacy Quilt"

By William Phillips

GCR's "Jane Austen Legacy Quilt" was created in 1987-88 by 15 GCR members and unveiled at the first JASNA-AGM to be held in Chicago (1988). The quilt is a replica of one worked by Jane and Cassandra Austen after they moved to Chawton Cottage in 1809. The original is currently displayed in a bedroom there—as part of the ever-expanding educational and curatorial mission of Jane Austen's House Museum.

Since 1988, the GCR quilt has made relatively few public appearances. It has been displayed at several GCR Spring Gala events and traveled once to be displayed by our neighbors and friends in the Wisconsin Region. Now within six months the quilt will have been on display at two Chicago area events.

Through the efforts of GCR Board Members, **Diane Capitani**, Outreach



Georgia Cibul posed with the quilt at the Chicago Botanic Garden show. *Courtesy of Margo Malos.*

Director and Member at Large **Georgia Cibul**, our Venue Guru, the quilt was shown on November 6-8 in the "Fine Art of Fiber" exhibition at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Diane and Georgia are both active in Illinois Quilters, Inc. (ICI) and are two of the group of 15 who helped to realize the completion of the GCR Quilt. ICI is part of a consortium of Illinois craft and folk art

groups who cooperate annually to present the fiber exhibition.

The next public outing for the GCR Quilt will be this coming May 2nd, to be on show for the GCR Annual Spring Gala at the Women's Athletic Club. We are planning this display as an opportunity for GCR members to view the quilt and learn something of its history (and that of its inspiration in Chawton. Since the theme of the up-coming Gala is "What Jane Saw," to which we might add as an aside, "and what Jane slept under."

## Birthday Tea

On December 6 we celebrated Austen's 239th birthday (as of December 16). Thanks to **Jane Hunt** we convened, as is our tradition, at The Fortnightly for tea and scrumptious finger foods and goodies. Program Chair **Debra Miller** made the introductions. Past Regional Coordinator **Natalie Goldberg** gave the champagne toast with an appreciation of *Mansfield Park* first published 201 years ago.

Regional Coordinator **Jeffrey Nigro** was our fabulous speaker. He reprised his Montreal AGM presentation "Favourable to Tenderness and Sentiment: The Many Meanings of Mary Crawford's Harp." His paper can be found in *Persuasions Online* at the JASNA national website.

Does her harp give us any clues to Mary Crawford's character? Her presumptuousness in considering herself entitled to use a cart to transport her harp, and her smart comment about country customs when she's informed one can't be spared during the harvest, tell us something about her. But Edmund and Fanny seem to be clueless. This may be due to various cultural assumptions about the harp. Both Edmund and Fanny are eager to hear Mary play. It is Edmund's favorite instrument; Fanny has never heard it.

The harp was associated with delicate urban luxury and with the French (Mary sprinkles French phrases throughout her speech), particularly French lasciviousness. Jeff showed us a painting of Mme. de Staël, whom Austen thought too scandalous to meet, in the guise of her novel's character Corinne with a lyre. He showed a painting of Marie Antoinette with a harp and played a recording of a shepherd's lovely song allegedly composed by her. The harp became associated with extravagance and with pastoral scenes.

The harp was also connected with the Celtic bards who are frequently portrayed with various forms of harps. Ossian, whose poems James Macpherson claimed to have discovered, always has a harp. (Samuel Johnson insisted these so-called ancient poems were a hoax.) Illustrations by William Blake show men with harps. Jeff showed us a portrait of a barebreasted lady as Hibernia (a classical name for Ireland), with an Irish wolfhound and an Irish harp with broken strings and a reclining female nude carved in its wood frame. Perhaps the painter was alluding to England's domination of Ireland and the 1801 Act of Union. Portraits of real women nude were acceptable if they appeared as historical or fictional characters, just not as themselves. The harp could also connote virtuousness. Jeff showed a painting of St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music, with a harp and angels.

All of these associations may have sparked Edmund's and Fanny's interest in Mary's harp. It then becomes a tool in her hands to seduce him. Mary places herself and her harp near a full-length window open to a beautiful summer view of the lawn and shrubbery which "was enough to catch any man's heart." It was all "favourable to tenderness and sentiment." Edmund is soon in love with Mary, or thinks he is. One wonders whether she knows Fanny loves him and is being intentionally cruel when she plays Fanny his favorite piece.

No wonder Edmund is seduced. Playing the harp with arms undulating, legs apart, revealing a pretty ankle, is "as sexy showing off as you can get and still be in the bounds of decorum," said Jeff. From the audience **Lori Davis** opined, "Let's admit it. It was Regency pole-dancing." The delighted attendees erupted with laughter.



# Tea Photos



Robert Fagan  
Portrait of a Lady as Hibernia  
c. 1801  
Private Collection



Clockwise from top left Presenter Jeff Nigro; Slide of Portrait of a Lady as Hibernia by Robert Fagan; Courtney Coppernoll and Darius Bukasinovic; Elia Rivera and her sister Alma; Dolores Henning; Mary Cieslik and Ruth Rosenberg; Felicia Keelen and daughter Dyani who was celebrating her birthday. Photos courtesy of Margo Malos.



# Sightings/Citings

By Elsie Holzwarth

## Opening Lines

In a review in *The NY Times Book Review* **Cynthia Ozick** begins, “Of Homer we know nothing, of Jane Austen not enough, of Kafka more and more, sometimes hour by hour; and yet Achilles and Elizabeth Bennet and Joseph K. press imperially on, independent of their makers. Lasting works hardly require us to be acquainted with the lives of the masters who bore them—they have pulsing hearts of their own.” Still, authors’ lives do interest us.

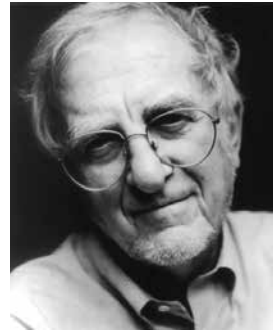
## Austen, Fitzgerald, and Beckett



In her new biography, *Penelope Fitzgerald: A Life*, **Hermione Lee** quotes Fitzgerald’s Austen-related notes. “Of Emma on Box Hill: ‘Emma has failed in her great virtue—gener-

osity. We love her spirit and hate to see her humbled.’ Of Lady Russell in *Persuasion*: ‘A right-feeling but wrong-judging parent, who does as much harm as an unfeeling one.’ On the last page of that novel: ‘Autumnal shadows even at the end of the book.’ Of Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice*: ‘She punishes herself too much.’ Of the characters in *Mansfield Park*: ‘We like Tom, though not Julia or Maria—how does JA do this?’ ‘Mrs. Norris is terrible, but there is a great fund of misdirected energy here.’ Of Fanny’s mother: ‘We see relentlessly what a difference some money makes.’”

Fitzgerald, a novelist, poet, essayist and biographer, took a keen interest in Samuel Beckett’s plays. The third volume of his letters (1957–1965) has recently been published. On January 16, 1963 he wrote, “Poor Jane has got herself in a mess at the end of *S. & S.*, the big scene between Elinor & Willoughby could hardly be worse. Perhaps irony is not quite the right word.” That’s enigmatic Beckett for you.



## In Memoriam

**Park Honan’s** 1987 *Jane Austen: Her Life* was the first major Austen biography since Elizabeth Jenkins’ book in 1938. Of Austen he opined, “Her attitude to a new situation was

to make fun of it, to see the irony of it, and to reconcile herself as far as possible to what she had to accept.” On her writing he wrote, “[N]ot since Shakespeare had anyone else watched people so well while evolving a manner with language that was sensitive and flexible enough to describe character while giving confident hints of psychological depths within.” Austen’s idea of happiness? “To be ‘happy’ is to seek one’s potential character and a state of being in which one is accurately aware of others’ feelings, with real sensibility, and can behave well in adversity.”



**P.D. James** added an Appendix to her memoir *Time to be in Earnest*. It was her essay “Emma” Considered as a *Detective Novel*. She wrote *Death Comes*

*to Pemberley* as a sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*. Asked what attracted her to Austen, she replied in a *Paris Review* interview, “Her irony and control of structure... the way she creates so distinctive a world in which I feel at home. I called my second daughter after her. She was born during some of the worst bombing in London. I went from Queen Charlotte’s Maternity Hospital to a basement flat in Hampstead because I thought it was safer being underground, and we could hear the flying bombs overhead and the guns trying to shoot them down, and I just read Jane Austen for the hundredth time.”

## A Tale of Two Cities: Chicago and London in Winter

Enjoying the weather? Wonder if our English counterparts have it any easier? Take a look at some of these winter statistics and facts and see for yourself.

	Chicago	London
<b>January Average High Temperature</b>	29°	44°
<b>January Average Low Temperature</b>	14°	40°
<b>January Total Average Snowfall</b>	42.5 inches	2.7 inches
<b>Miles that Snow Trucks Travel to Plow the City</b>	9,456	9,215 Does London even own any plows?
<b>Best Hot Chocolate</b>	Katherine Anne Confections 2745 W. Armitage  Founded in 2006, they offer hand-dipped truffles, soft honey caramels, and pillowy marshmallows that are ridiculously good, partially due to using Midwest ingredients. Cream is from a 500-cow herd of Jerseys in central Illinois, and local wildflower honey is used to replace corn syrup.	Artisan du Chocolat They have locations in London, one in Dublin, and one coming to Saudi Arabia.  They make their own milk chocolate, specializing in salted caramel, crème brûlée and confiture de lait.
<b>Fireplaces</b>	28 in the White House (Washington, D.C., can be considered East Chicago!)	Over 300 in Buckingham Palace
<b>Must-See New Year's Eve Movie</b>	<i>It's a Wonderful Life</i> (1946)  After George Bailey (James Stewart) wishes he had never been born, an angel (Henry Travers) is sent to earth to make George's wish come true. George starts to realize how many lives he has changed and impacted, and how they would be different if he was never there.	<i>The Thirty-Nine Steps</i> (1935)  While on vacation in London, Canadian Richard Hannay (Robert Donat) becomes embroiled in an international spy ring related to the mysterious "39 steps." He must elude the police, who are hunting him for murder, while he tries to stop Professor Jordan (Godfrey Tearle) from sending secrets out of the country. Hannay is assisted by Pamela (Madeleine Carroll), an unwilling accomplice who discovers the truth.
<b>Closest and Best Ski Resort</b>	Chestnut Mountain Resort, Galena, IL (180 miles away)  Chestnut Mountain Resort is a Galena Illinois resort that has become a premier Midwest ski destination with its nineteen trails that span 220 rolling acres with a total vertical drop of 475 feet.	Cairn Gorm Ski Area, Glenshee, Scotland (390 miles away)  The Scottish Highlands and the Cairngorm Mountain above Aviemore in the beautiful Cairngorm National Park offer spectacular scenery and a variety of winter sports for everyone. Skiing in Scotland can be as good as the Alps and skiers travel to the Scottish ski slopes to take advantage of the savings.
<b>Percentage of Population on a Diet</b>	23	55
<b>Days to Opening Day (as of the newsletter's publishing date)</b>	80 days for the Chicago Cubs first home game on April 5	104 days to the opening rounds at Wimbledon on June 29
<b>Favorite Vacation Location for Natives</b>	Las Vegas	Amsterdam, Netherlands

LETTER FROM CHICAGO

JASNA-GCR

5439 Dierks Drive

Rockford, IL 61108

*Winter Meeting*  
Sunday, February 8

# Calendar

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**February 8**      **2015 GCR Winter Meeting.** Family Style Lunch and “Gilpin, the Picturesque, and Dr. Syntax” presented by Author Kim Wilson. 12:00 pm–3:00 pm. Marcello’s Lincoln Park, 645 W. North Ave., Chicago, IL 60610.

**May 2**              **Spring Gala.** “What Jane Saw”. Woman’s Athletic Club, 626 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611.

**May 3**              **2:00 pm. JASNA-GCR group visit to *Sense and Sensibility* at Chicago Shakespeare Theater.** Details on registration to follow!

**For more events and programs that will be of interest, visit our website at [jasnachicago.org](http://jasnachicago.org), and click on Events>Austen-Related Events.**