

Letter from Chicago

Summer 2010



Sunday, September 26, 2010
2:30 pm

Jane Austen in the 'hood;
A visual tour around Austen's
London characters
presented by Sue Forgue

Evanston Public Library
1703 Orrington Avenue, Evanston, IL
Refreshments will be served.

FREE and OPEN to the PUBLIC

MEMBER DUES RENEWAL INSIDE



Annual Regional Membership 2010-2011

- **One-Year JASNA-GCR Membership Dues are as follows:**
\$25.00 for an Individual
\$35.00 for a Family (Two family members at the same address)
- **Membership dues cover the present to August 31, 2011**
- **Membership includes newsletters and discounts on JASNA-GCR events**
- **Please fill out this form and return with check made out to JASNA-GCR or renew online at www.jasnachicago.org**

Important Information: This form and your payment are for Regional Dues only.

Our Charter requires you to join or renew with our parent JASNA National Organization requiring **separate dues**. The National Organization membership form is available online at www.jasna.org.

Check one: Renewing Member New Member

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Apt. _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ - _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Please indicate if any of the above information has changed, so that we may update our records. Your complete address, including apartment number and 9-digit zip code, will help ensure timely delivery of mail. If you are not receiving regular e-mails from JASNA-GCR, please provide your current e-mail address to be used for all online transactions.

DUES and CONTRIBUTIONS

AMOUNT ENCLOSED

I am enclosing \$\$ for JASNA-GCR Regional Dues 2011:

- \$25.00 for an Individual _____
 - \$35.00 for a Family _____
 - \$25.00 for a 2010 Gift Membership _____
 - Contribution to JASNA-GCR _____
- TOTAL _____

Send my Gift Membership to (please provide name and address):

Renew Online or Mail this form with your check to:

JASNA-GCR—c/o Elsie Holzwarth, 1410 E. 55th St., Chicago IL 60615-5409

If you have any questions, e-mail jasnachicago@gmail.com [Please Note NEW EMAIL ADDRESS].

For more information, visit our web site www.jasnachicago.org

Natalie Goldberg

September Meeting

For the first time, our free, fall open meeting will be on Sunday to accommodate members who have difficulty attending Saturday afternoon meetings. We also meet later this year, after the university fall term is underway. Perhaps students and faculty, intrigued by our topic, will join us. Invite friends and family for an engaging Sunday afternoon and enjoy the refreshments, thanks to **Margo Goia, Lori Davis, and Pat Wieber.**

Our speaker, member **Sue Forgue**, has been developing a research/fanfiction website with programmer friends since the 1995 Colin Firth *Pride and Prejudice*. It has interactive time and distance maps, including the detailed map of London, which she will use in her lecture, a searchable database with Georgian names, fashion prints, Regency prints of locations, and a chronology that will become more interactive over the coming months. Soon there will be an apothecary shop with a searchable database of medicinal plants and herbs. Sue is a history buff and loves responding with the right citations to her friends' questions. But one question Sue would love to ask Jane Austen: "What was in those letters that Cassandra burned?"

Her work involves many meetings with tax lawyers, accountants and art curators; she explains, "I see a lot of Austen's characters!" Her first AGM was Tucson, and from then on, she was hooked. Sue worked closely with **Martha Jameson** and **Jane Davis** for our 2008 AGM registration and will rejoin the Board as member-at-large.

GCR Election

During our annual September business meeting, we will vote in a new Board of

Directors. Our bylaws have been amended to align with JASNA, our parent organization. Several changes were made to the Board; two positions were added, and titles and duties of officers and directors were redefined. To provide for continuity, the eleven Board members will serve staggered terms. Five officers will be elected in even-numbered years with the remaining six board members elected in odd-numbered years. To begin the cycle, six members will serve a one-year term.



The Nominating Committee proposes an excellent Slate of candidates:

For terms ending in 2012:

Regional Coordinator, Jeff Nigro
Treasurer, Cathy Feldman
Membership Director, Pat Wieber
Program Director, Elisabeth Lenckos
Member-at-Large, Sue Forgue

For terms ending in 2011:

Deputy RC/Parliamentarian, William Phillips
Recording Secretary, Shirley Holbrook
Education Outreach Director, Diane Capitani
Publicity Director, Lori Davis
Publications Director, Sara Okey
Member-at-Large, Linda Reinert



GCR has enjoyed talks by Regional Coordinator nominee, **Jeff Nigro**, since 1992, when he spoke to our Gala about art in Austen's time. He wowed the AGM with his curtain raiser lecture, "*Visualizing Jane Austen.*" Like many others, Jeff has appreciated our society's bringing together scholars and "real people," those who come

just because they are smart, love to learn, and love Austen. The heroine he's most in love with is Anne Elliott, though among the heroes, he says, "I'll take Henry Tilney any day" because he likes folks with a sense of humor. Jeff has been our Academic Liaison for the past two years and will bring his experience, scholarship and sense of humor to our meetings.

Two other important members of the 2008 AGM committee will remain on the board. **William Phillips** was the co-coordinator and **Elisabeth Lenckos** was the Break Out Sessions Chair. Both have served on our Board for several years; William had been Program Director and will return as Vice President (renamed Deputy Regional Coordinator); Elisabeth had been Academic Liaison and will return as Program Director. Past RC Joän Pawlelski tapped William for the Board when she met him at his first AGM presentation in Colorado Springs. William was teaching in Japan, but planning to return to Chicago shortly. Elisabeth had joined JASNA as a graduate student in the 1990s but became very active when she moved to Chicago in 2000. Elisabeth grew up reading Austen; in fact, her dissatisfaction with the German translations inspired her to learn English!

Nominee for Treasurer, **Cathy Feldman**, has been a JASNA member since 1981 and became a life member since the late 80s. She had great fun at our 2008 AGM with her young teenage daughter, but she was in charge of hotel arrangements for the 1988 Chicago AGM. As a retired math teacher from the University of Chicago Lab Schools, she will be excellent at keeping our accounts balanced. Cathy said that her mother made her read *Pride and Prejudice* when she was 14, but thought Jane was the heroine because she was the prettiest. Her revisit to the novel at age 31 "bowled me over"; she quickly read the other five novels and became a fan. Her favorite character is Anne Elliot, though she'd like to have a conversation with Charlotte

Lucas. "She is right in her observations of others and she approaches life with a determination to be content."

Another retired math teacher from the Lab Schools, **Shirley Holbrook**, has accepted the position of Recording Secretary. About twenty years ago, Shirley attended our meetings as guest of Cathy. Then she and her husband Rick joined. Her favorite quote comes from *Pride and Prejudice* ("For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbours, and laugh at them in our turn?"), but she now finds "Willoughby fascinating and relishes the dreadful Mrs. Norris, Lady Catherine and the Misses Steele." **Pat Wieber**, our nominee for Membership Secretary enjoyed putting together the Emporium at our AGM and corresponding with authors who took part in the book signing. Pat first heard about JASNA through a course taught by Elisabeth. Our nominee for Education Outreach Director (formerly Academic Liaison) is **Diane Capitani**, is a lecturer in English and religion at Garrett Seminary and Northwestern University and directs doctoral dissertations. Diane has given talks for AGMs and our region.

Lori Davis returns as Publicity Director; her favorite AGM activity was the Regency Ball and has attended Regency Balls in Lansing, Michigan. Lori will work closely with **Sara Okey**, nominated Publications Director. Sara teaches English at Rockford East High School, her alma mater, for the last five years. Sara appreciates the dependable characters, Elinor Dashwood and Fanny Price. Sara was introduced to JASNA by **Linda Reinert**, who joins the board as member at large; Linda first read Jane Austen when she began her PhD program in English. One of Linda's favorite teaching moments was bringing ten students from her Women Writers class to the high school program at our 2008 AGM. Linda started an Austen Reading Group for the northwest suburbs and would like to help others start Austen Reading groups.

Preview



It's 1813 and you've just arrived in London. Family and friends have provided you with this listing of available lodgings. Which one should you choose? And what if any are the consequences of choosing one over another?

If you are having trouble deciding (or even if you think you know), come join us for the September presentation, ***Jane Austen in the 'hood; A visual tour around Austen's London characters*** and you will find out what choice is right for you.

All map panels in this presentation are courtesy of the Guildhall Library of London.

-Holborn Street
-Grosvenor Street
-Gracechurch Street
-Wimpole Street

September meeting

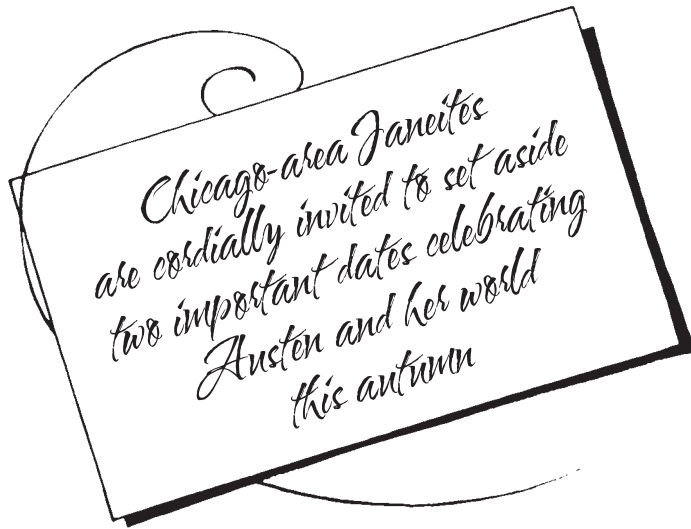
Location, location, location. . . how those words become our mantra when purchasing or selling real estate but where you lived in Regency London not only established an address but also spoke of your class in society. We'll explore this social geography in Jane Austen's novels in our next lecture, *Jane Austen in the 'hood; A visual tour around Austen's London characters* on Sunday September 26, 2010, 2:30 pm at the Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Avenue. There is no cost to attend this lecture.

Sue Forgue, JASNA GCR board member and webmaster of the research website, *The Regency Encyclopedia*, will use colorful prints from the era and the amazingly detailed Horwood's Map of London dating from 1813 to uncover clues that would have been obvious to readers of Austen's time but are less apparent to today's readers of the novels.

Jane Austen provided a wide array of characters who live in London for all or part of the year. Our tour will travel from east to west in the metropolis to visit a tradesman, a lawyer, a commuter from the suburbs, the nouveau riche and another member of an ancient and untitled family. Join us on September 26th to discover who we'll visit and enjoy an entertaining and educational tour of Regency Era London as Jane Austen would have known it. For more information, visit www.jasnachicago.org.

SUNDAY. . .SUNDAY. . .SUNDAY

PLEASE NOTE THIS MEETING IS SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 26
2:30 PM AT THE EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



October 2: The Graham School at the University of Chicago

will hold its first-ever **Jane Austen Day** entitled “*Netherfield Park is let at last*”: *The World of Jane Austen*. The seminar, organized by Marissa Love, Director of Humanities Programs at the Graham School and **Dr. Elisabeth Lenckos**, Graham School Instructor, will run from 9:45 am–5:00 pm at the Gleacher Center, 450 City Front Plaza, Chicago, Illinois 60611. It will feature stimulating expert lectures on Austen, her novels, and the art, history, and culture of her time. Representatives will be drawn both from JASNA-GCR and the school and promise a lively exchange of disciplines, backgrounds, opinions and ideas. The day will conclude with a discussion and audience participation.

Register online:

<http://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/>

or by phone (773/702-1722).

Tuition: \$115. Course Code: LALIWJ-10A1.

November 7: The Chicago Humanities Festival,

in partnership with the Jane Austen Society of North America and the Greater Chicago Region will feature a program on Jane Austen engaging the Festival’s 2010

theme, *The Body*. The CHF description reads: “Two Jane Austen aficionados join forces to plumb the many themes, undercurrents, and references to the body in Austen’s novels. Medical doctor **Cheryl Kinney** diagnoses ‘Austen-itis’ as the recurrent use of sickness, health, frailty, and injury to develop Austen’s characters, drive her plots, and establish the comedic side of characters’ suffering. University of Chicago comparative literature and philosophy scholar **Elisabeth Lenckos** focuses on Austen and intelligent love; she explores the notion of the ‘desiring body’ and physical expressiveness in Austen’s work. Lenckos also examines the recent ‘Monster Austen’ craze and the connection between Austen and deformity.” The event, presented thanks in part to our member **Sue Forgue**, will take place at the Harold Washington Library, Chicago, from 3:30–4:30 pm.

To find more information and to register, please visit the website of the festival at: www.chicagohumanities.org.

Our members at the AGM

October 29: A slide/lecture by **Jeff Nigro**, *Mystery Meets Muslin: Regency Gothic Dress in Art, Fashion and the Theatre*

October 29: Breakout session with **Vicky Hinshaw**, *About Those Abbeys: A Trip Through History, Literature and the Picturesque*

October 30: Breakout session with **Elisabeth Lenckos**, *The Perils and Delights of Gothic Aesthetics in Northanger Abbey*.

October 30: Post-banquet “Monster Mash” with **Elsie Holzwarth**, *American Gothic: Edgar Allan Poe in the Shadows of Northanger Abbey*.

October 31: “Dispute Without Mayhem” Panel, including panelist **William Phillips**

Annual Gala

On April 24 our Greater Chicago Region celebrated its Annual Gala with delicious Italian food at Maggiano's Banquet Room. This was the first time we were there, having found our customary hotel to be very expensive. From the reactions so far we found our experiment to be quite successful. Thanks to our Program Chair **Elisabeth Lenckos** we heard three stimulating speakers.

Elaine Bander, Regional Coordinator of JASNA's Montreal-Quebec City Region, in her talk, *Coquelicot ribbons instead of green: Bonnets, Books, and Catherine Morland*, informed us that Catherine has "sound, healthy affections and good common sense." She is an empiricist because she observes the ways of the world, tests new experiences, and chooses her own authentic voice. In fact, she is an "exemplary empiricist; when she falters it is not because she reads novels, but because she loves Henry." Catherine "judges sensibly and learns from experience to do what is right, uniting love with reason."

Greg Nosan, Associate Director of Publications, the Art Institute of Chicago, narrated a PowerPoint presentation: *Broken promises and broken arches: The Power of Place in Northanger Abbey*. Although Austen "doesn't waste paragraphs describing buildings, assuming readers know Bath," for us the pictures were fascinating: Blaize Castle, an 1805 view of the Orange Grove with the Abbey in the background, the Abbey churchyard "where Isabella runs after 2 odious men," the Pump Room, aerial views of the Royal Crescent and the Circus, and 4 Sydney Place where Austen lived in Bath.

Laura Whitlock, President of the Millinery Arts Alliance (whose purpose is "to encourage the wearing of hats"), in her talk, "... *My hat, on which ...my principal hopes of happiness depend*": *Jane Austen and the Supremacy of the Bonnet*, traced the history of the bonnet and showed us various bonnets "that were the most prevalent headwear in the 19th Century." We saw cotton, silk and straw bonnets, and hats with built-in hairpieces, turbans, and headdresses with feathers, many of which were modeled by our member, actor **Debra Ann Miller**. Laura also displayed an attractive selection of her unique, handmade hats, in bright, gorgeous colors.

We raised a glass of pinot grigio to Austen for the toast given by **Sandra Gross**. Each table puzzled over the fiendishly hard quiz devised by **William Phillips**, putting their heads together for answers as best they could. At the winning table the grand prize, donated by **Jeanne Steen**, was taken home by **Elizabeth Ireland**. The book sale table was organized by **Beverly Roth**.

Our student poster contest prize winners were announced by Regional Coordinator **Natalie Goldberg**. Posters were placed around the meeting room to be admired. The first place winner was **Anne Davis** who, because she is so closely connected with our group, submitted her entry under a pseudonym. Second place winners were **Eleanora Beier** and **Nicole Nystrom**. Each of these winners attended. Honorable mentions were given to **Alysa Rose** and **Dana Zeno**, and were received by their teacher, our member **Linda Reinert**.

It was a wonderful day!



Gala Photos



Natalie Goldberg



Elaine Bander



Greg Nosan



Anne Davis



Eleonora Beier



Laura Whitlock



Nicole Nystrom



Linda Reinert



William Phillips and Victoria Hinshaw



LuanneRedmond, Joan Lyman and Pat Dragasic



Liz Ireland

Natalie Goldberg, looking back on having been Regional Coordinator of our Region, what thoughts come to mind?



Longtime friend and Regional Coordinator **Joän Pawelski** became ill with cancer and she asked for my help. In 2005, I agreed to be co-RC with her. GCR was preparing to host the 2008 AGM, and we had much work ahead of us. Within a few months, illness

forced Joän to resign. *Austen's Legacy*, our theme, was Joän's idea, and what a successful meeting we had! I've been fortunate to work with a terrific Board.

We've had wonderful programs, and thanks to **Elsie Holzwarth**, our treasurer, we leave the next board with a fiscally sound region. Thanks to **Martha Jameson**, our membership secretary, for initiating and administering our online renewal and registration site. Martha entered nearly 670 names for our AGM registration and has overseen five years of GCR renewals, registered over twenty regional events, printed all event name tags, and emailed members reminders of activities.

What got you interested in Jane Austen in the first place?

My older sister had a copy of *Pride and Prejudice*, which she said I was too young to read (13?). Naturally, I read it and loved it! I didn't read *Emma* until a college course, but not until I went to Berkeley for my Master's degree did I really study Austen's style. In 1989 I received an NEH grant for teachers for a summer session on Austen with Prof. Gene Ruoff. Imagine being paid to read and discuss Jane Austen! I discovered new critical approaches to her work.

How long have you been in JASNA and what prompted your involvement?

In 1987, the *Tribune* Sunday Book Review listed a Jane Austen Birthday/Christmas party at the Newberry Library and I thought—what fun! My two daughters had seen the Elizabeth Garvey BBC *Pride and Prejudice*, and one was reading the novel in school. We went and discovered kindred spirits. One activity put us all into small groups to recreate an Austen scene in modern language, and the entire room filled with laughter. I joined that day and attended my first AGM the following fall. Since then I've been on panels, led a discussion and participated in debates and Readers' Theatre at our meetings. My favorite book is still *Pride and Prejudice*.

What were your experiences teaching Jane Austen?

Perhaps that first meeting inspired my work with acting out mini-scenes to bring Austen to life. I discovered many students were visual learners; setting up the scene and moving towards and away from each other helped them "get it." Once they became engaged, Austen's characters took over. Students would tell me that Emma sits at their lunch table or their sister or friend is whiny Mary Musgrove! Under Joän's guidance, the region planned a guide for high school teachers: *Teaching Jane Austen*. I contributed an introduction and study guide for *Emma*, and organized sets of mini-scenes with a grading rubric for three Austen novels. Other members had prepared material, including Joan Ray and Inger Brodey, but once Joän's illness took over, the project was dropped. **Sara Okey** has agreed to work on this project, and **Lori Davis** suggested putting it on our website in a format that teachers may download. We hope others will also contribute ideas and lesson plans. Teachers may think Austen is too erudite for high schoolers, but she is very relevant today; in fact, with current films and modernized sequels, Austen is cool!

Sightings/Citings

Detectives

Our member **Enid Golinkin** sent us the following “nuggets of Jane Austen from an unlikely source, *Murderess Ink*, a fascinating and delightful book about female detectives—and female murderesses.

Catherine Aird discusses the brilliant mystery writer, **Josephine Tey**, whose life, she says, was as ‘free from high drama as that of Jane Austen.’ John McAleer says that of the 103 authors Nero Wolfe (the famous, hugely obese armchair detective) read during the course of the mysteries involving him, only seven were by women. About Jane Austen, Wolfe’s creator **Rex Stout** says, ‘Wolfe held it against Jane Austen for forcing him to concede that a woman could write a good novel.’

To my astonishment, author **Jack Kerouac** comments, ‘I used to think that men did everything better than women, but that was before I read Jane Austen. I don’t think any man ever wrote better than Jane Austen.’ (In fairness, perhaps, I ought to read Kerouac, an author I had never considered before.) Every fan of **P.D. James**’ wonderful mysteries will be pleased to learn that her detective, Cordelia Gray, reads ‘Hardy and Jane Austen, Keats and William Blake.’”

Jigsaws

In *The Pattern in the Carpet: A Personal History with Jigsaws*, **Margaret Drabble** writes about her childhood and her family, especially her Aunt Phyl with whom she would do jigsaw puzzles. She discusses the “dissection of Spilsbury maps” as a form of jigsaw puzzle and mentions Maria and Julia looking down on Fanny who was not acquainted with the dissected map of Europe. “In the first weeks of Fanny’s residence at Mansfield Park, evidence of her prodigious ignorance is brought regularly in fresh reports to Lady Bertram in the drawing room: ‘Dear mamma, only

think, my cousin cannot put the map of Europe together—...—Did you ever hear anything so stupid?’ ”

Genius

Motoko Rich reported in *The New York Times* that “British author, **Hilary Mantel**, was awarded the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction for *Wolf Hall* a historical novel about the court of Henry VIII that centered on the king’s advisor Thomas Cromwell. Ms. Mantel had already won the 41st annual Man Booker Prize last fall for the book. She was cited for a work that was ‘original in voice and ambitious in style.’”

It was Mantel who wrote the essay on Austen in *Literary Genius: 25 Classic Writers who Define English & American Literature* edited by **Joseph Epstein**: “What keeps her readers constantly attentive is that we can’t agree on an interpretation of her novels, or settle them in our mind. Every time you read her, the story seems to be slightly different, you notice a different emphasis that had escaped you. Surely this is the definition of genius in a writer: the capacity to make a text that can give and give, a text that is never fully read, a text that goes on multiplying meanings.”

Art

On the death of French filmmaker **Eric Rohmer** [*My Night at Maud’s*, *Claire’s Knee*, etc.], André Aciman wrote in *The New York Times*: “With Eric Rohmer, as with Mozart, Austen, James and Proust, we need to remember that art is seldom about life, or not quite about life. Art is about discovery and design and reasoning with chaos. If there is one thing I will miss with Eric Rohmer’s death, it is the clarity, the candor and the pleasure with which one human can sit with another and reason about love and not forget, in Pascal’s words, that ‘the heart has reasons that reason knows nothing of.’”

LETTER FROM CHICAGO
JASNA-GCR
Elsie G. Holzwarth
1410 East 55th Street
Chicago, IL 60615-5409

September 26 Meeting
Evanston Public Library

Calendar

September 1 Dues are due.

September 26 *Jane Austen in the 'hood': A visual tour around Austen's London characters.* PowerPoint presentation by Sue Forgue.
Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Ave., Evanston, IL
2:30 pm–4:30 pm. Free.

October 2 *Jane Austen Day.* Graham School of the University of Chicago
450 City Front Plaza, Chicago, IL. 9:45 am–5:00 pm.

October 28–31 Annual AGM, *Jane Austen and The Abbey: Mystery Mayhem and Muslin in Portland, OR.*

December 4 Birthday Tea. “*Are You Sure They Are All Horrid? Austen's Degrees of Disagreeability.*” Talk by Michael Allocca. The Fortnightly of Chicago,
120 E. Bellevue, Chicago, IL 2:00 pm–4:00 pm.

Our website is www.jasnachicago.org