

# Letter from Chicago

Fall 2009

## Birthday Tea

Saturday, December 12, 2009

2:00pm-4:00pm

The Fortnightly of Chicago,  
120 East Bellevue, Chicago, IL

Tales of Chawton Cottage  
1809-2009

commemorate  
the move to  
Chawton



Parking at  
50 and 100 East Bellevue Buildings

### TEA REGISTRATION FORM

Members: \$40; Guests: \$50

Registration deadline: December 7

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 **Elsie Holzwarth, 1410 East 55th Street, Chicago, IL 60615-5409.**

Natalie Goldberg

## December Tea

On Saturday December 12, at our annual Jane Austen Birthday Tea, **GCR Readers' Theatre** will present *First Find a Good Place to Plant Potatoes: Tales of Chawton Cottage, 1809–2009*. **William Phillips** has written and directed a series of scenes and images focusing on Jane Austen's move to Chawton Cottage in July, 1809, and some events in her life that immediately followed this return to country life. William's title refers to Mrs. Austen's prompt planting of potatoes when she moved into Chawton Cottage, along with her two daughters, Cassandra and Jane, and their friend Martha Lloyd. There Mrs. Austen cultivated her potatoes (as she had at Jane's childhood home, Steventon).

Once again in a settled home, and back in Hampshire, Jane Austen returned to writing the novels we celebrate in Austen societies around the world. As she explained to her niece Anna Austen, in her critique of Anna's novel, "You are now collecting your People delightfully, getting them exactly into such a spot as is the delight of my life;—3 or 4 Families in a Country Village is the very thing to work on."



William explains, "The presentation imagines conversations among the Austen ladies and letters which have never before seen the light of day. These and connective commentaries are partly inspired by the facts we know of life at the Cottage. However, the program also reflects the burgeoning 'Austen World' that

has been spawned in the wake of the six magnificent novels by one of the most important writers in the history of the English language, and that gave us the current incarnation of Chawton Cottage as the 'Jane Austen House' Museum."

In our return to The Fortnightly of Chicago, we again will have a scrumptious array of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres and wonderful desserts sure to please everyone. The setting is perfect. We hope you will use this event to treat family and friends.

## 2009 AGM

The Greater Chicago Region was well represented at the AGM in Philadelphia. Enjoying the discussions of sisters and brothers and all the different excursions, workshops, plays and dancing were **Diane Capitani, Georgia Cibul, Jeanne Claeys, Liz Philosophos Cooper, Lori Davis, Jane Davis, Pat Davis, Patricia Dragisic, Nancy Dunagan, Phyllis Dunagan, David Dunagan, Sue Forgue, Natalie Goldberg, Jeanne Hayman, Victoria Hinshaw, Elsie Holzwarth, Elizabeth Roob Ireland, Jacob Kremer, Patricia Latkin, Elisabeth Lenckos, Corinne McArdle, Avis Lee Neiman, Jeff Nigro, Sara Okey, Beth Pavelka, William Phillips, Molly Philosophos, Linda Reinert, Joan Roob, Yuki Shelton, Cynthia Turksi and Duwana Wall**. Friends from Indiana who also join our GCR events included **Sondra Bowers, Janet Katich, and Sue Landaw**. Members of GCR also were on the program. Elisabeth Lenckos opened the weekend with a wonderful interview of Elizabeth Garvie, the star of the 1980 BBC production who started my two daughters' love of Austen. William Phillips and Jeff Nigro were smart and dashing models for Regency male clothing in the popular special fashion session, *Dressing Mr. Darcy*, given by costume collector and JASNA member Lisa Brown.

## Report from Chawton

During July 2009, the two great cultural institutions devoted to Jane Austen and British women's writing that are located in the picturesque Hampshire village of Chawton, celebrated the bicentenary of the author's move into the home that her brother, Edward Austen-Knight, had made available for Jane, her mother, her sister Cassandra and her friend, Martha Lloyd, after years of peregrinations. **Jane Austen's House Museum** commemorated the occasion with the opening of a beautiful visitors' reception, shop and learning center; **Chawton House Library** organized the *New Directions in Austen Studies* conference, which brought together distinguished scholars from all over the world to honor the author, her legacy, and her inspiration.

The exact date of Jane Austen's move was 7 July 1809. From the letters that she wrote, we can still appreciate what a momentous occasion this was in her life. After over a decade as a permanent visitor in other people's houses, Jane Austen was finally able to settle down to an ordered, secure way of life in the beautiful landscape of her childhood. Her new Chawton address offered her the ability to do as she liked best: follow a daily routine, enjoy a pretty garden, take country walks, visit family in the neighborhood, and shop in the nearby town. But most importantly, the loving care of her sister and friend relieved Jane Austen from most household tasks, and she was at last able to take up her pen again. The eagerness with which she returned to her writing upon her arrival in Hampshire reveals clearly that she had not lost, but merely put on hold, her splendid creativity.

Sitting at the little table by the drawing room window overlooking the village high street, she allowed her



genius this second chance to pour forth into her literary work. Freed from constraints on her time, she revised the novels that she had begun in her youth and also worked on new stories. The house that Jane Austen lovingly called a "cottage" until her death in 1817 witnessed her reading her masterpieces *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) and *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) for publication. It also saw her become the proud lady author of the seminal *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1815) and *Persuasion* (1818).

This magical site where the writer found creative refuge in 1809 is now the site of the Jane Austen's House Museum. "Museum" is of course the correct term to use, but it still feels like a home; when one enters, one expects Jane to welcome one into her parlor. The birthplace of the modern British novel has always been lovingly maintained, but the administration recently built new extensions and added excellent informative exhibits to those in existence.

July 7, 2009, was the official press opening, and visitors were invited to view the improvements to the house, which also include a film biography about Jane Austen narrated by actor and museum patron **Elizabeth Garvie** and interactive displays giving valuable insights into Austen's world. These were designed by **Louise West**, the museum's most capable Education Officer,



Louise West

who had invited friends, colleagues, and press for cake and champagne to toast Jane Austen's move to Chawton and the opening of the "new" Jane Austen's House Museum. It was a moving occasion. After a morning of pouring rain, the sun broke brilliantly through the clouds as guests raised their glasses to "Jane Austen's Homecoming: Chawton 1809," the event that inspired the finest works written by a woman in the English language.

From July 9th–11th 2009, Chawton House Library celebrated Jane Austen’s move to Chawton in its own, inimitable way. **Dr. Gillian Dow**, Chawton Fellow and Professor at the University of Southampton and its Center for Eighteenth Century Studies, her colleagues and staff, organized a splendid conference entitled *New Directions in Austen Studies*. Keynote speakers included **Isobel Grundy, Juliet McMaster, Deirdre le Faye, Linda Bree, Janet Todd, Emma Clery** and **Kathryn Sutherland**, in addition to a hundred attendants from diverse backgrounds and disciplines who debated and discussed the future of Jane Austen studies. From the juvenilia to the fragments and late works, from aesthetics to contemporary culture, from philosophy to comparative studies, and from the music to the dances described in Austen’s novels, every aspect of her world was celebrated by the presenters. A feast for the Austenite, and no wonder, since lecturers hailed from as far away as Japan, Australia, North America, and Europe!

But all work and no play make Jane a dull girl, so the staff at Chawton ensured that



Chawton House

conference participants were given many delights to entertain them. Chawton House, Edward Austen-Knight’s former Hampshire estate, grand, gorgeous, gothic, and beautifully restored, is a pleasure to explore, as are the fine eighteenth-century gardens. Then there is the library, arguably the most important room in the house, lovingly overseen by librarian **Jacqui Grainger**, who welcomed guests by displaying some of Chawton’s most prized bibliophile possessions and manuscripts. In addition, Gillian Dow and her colleague **Katie Halsey** put together a booklet entitled *Jane Austen’s Reading: The*

*Chawton Years*. This publication focused on the books owned by Chawton House Library that Austen referenced during her residence in the village and include such famous works as **Ann Radcliffe’s** *The Romance of the Forest* and *The Works of Lord Byron*.

This being England, it rained during the conference, but chandelier-lit tents, beautifully decorated with flowers, kept audiences and lecturers warm and dry. The meals were delicious; the tea and coffee breaks during the day, and the wine receptions in the evening, allowed ample opportunities for those favorite Austen pastimes, conversation with friends, communion with the house, exploration of the gardens, and a stroll to Chawton Church and the cemetery where Jane’s mother and sister are buried. On the second evening, participants were taken to the City of Winchester, given a tour of its sublime cathedral, and a memorable dinner at the cathedral refectory. The dinner was preceded by “Pimms on the lawn,” and the sight of some British ladies, whose elegant evening dress contrasted intriguingly with their footwear, since they, wise with the valuable knowledge what a rainy summer may do to a lawn and thus, to one’s fancy evening sandals, had not hesitated to don their Wellington gumboots.

The conference ended the next evening on a wonderfully apposite note, with a concert for piano, baritone, soprano, and children’s voices performing songs and ballads of Jane Austen’s time. The evening of music which one could imagine to have been performed by Austen, her friends and her family, made for a lovely conclusion to a superb get-together of Austen scholars, teachers, and loving readers. Not an event I will soon forget, in particular because many attendants of this conference came up to me to mention how much they enjoyed the Chicago 2008 AGM! After all, and despite its global dimensions, the Jane Austen world remains a small-ish one. How nice!

## A Gift to Chawton House

On Monday, May 11, 2009, my husband Ed and I visited the Chawton House Library in Hampshire as part of a holiday in England. I



Hinshaw and Grainger

presented the Library with three volumes of *La Belle Assemblée* from 1815 and 1816 for the Chawton House collection.

Jacqui Grainger,

Librarian, accepted them, then escorted us on a tour of the House and its latest acquisitions.

*La Belle Assemblée*, a magazine also known as *Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine Addressed to the Ladies*, was published from 1806 until 1832 by Mr. John Bell (1745-1831). He published many books on British poets and writers as well as *Bell's Weekly Messenger* and numerous other works. *La Belle Assemblée* came out monthly with articles of interest to ladies, biographies of important people, news of the social set, and the latest trends in fashion. Two engraved fashion plates were included in every issue, hand-colored by painters employed by the publisher. The magazines were intended to be saved and taken to a book seller to be bound in 6-month volumes. Sadly, though many libraries around the world still have these books, the fashion plates often have gone missing. My two 1816 volumes were intact, with all of the fashion plates in their rightful places. I acquired them from a dealer in Virginia some years ago for research purposes. I enjoyed having them, but felt they deserved a wider readership.

In addition to the 1816 volumes, I donated the July-December 1815 volume, but without the fashion plates attached. Over the years, however, I acquired eleven of the twelve plates, either from print dealers or on e-bay. I

included those plates with the book, separately but of use to researchers.

JASNA-CGR members saw many fashion prints from my collection at the spring Gala in May, 2002. One wonders what varying fashion assumptions governed the choice of dresses and poses. Some of the plates show very practical day dresses and warm pelisses. Others picture exotic costumes in which one can hardly imagine being seen in public. Of course, one might wonder about the same thing when viewing some of the ensembles in *Vogue* or *Elle*, I suppose.

The day before our visit to the Library, we stopped by Jane Austen's House, about a half mile away in the village of Chawton. Two hundred years ago, Jane Austen, her mother and sister, moved into the cottage, courtesy of her brother Edward Austen, who had inherited the Chawton estate from his adoptive parents, the Knights. I had visited several times in the past, but this time I found the house covered with scaffolding for conservation and repairs funded by Britain's Heritage Lottery Fund. Additional construction was underway for a new learning center, improved necessary facilities and a sales room, all seriously needed to relieve congestion in the house. The kitchen will also be opened to the public. The house was very crowded that Sunday, with booming sales in the gift shop and in the bookstore, both to be moved out when the project is complete. It was almost impossible to see anything of the house for all the eager visitors—and shoppers. The improvements will be greatly appreciated by all.

In the afternoon, a few miles down the road in Selborne, we visited Gilbert White's House, inspired by the description in **Kim Wilson's** *In the Garden with Jane Austen*.

We spent a delightful hour roaming the springtime paths among budding vegetables and under the laburnum arch, beginning to fill in with yellow clusters of flowers.

## Word Search

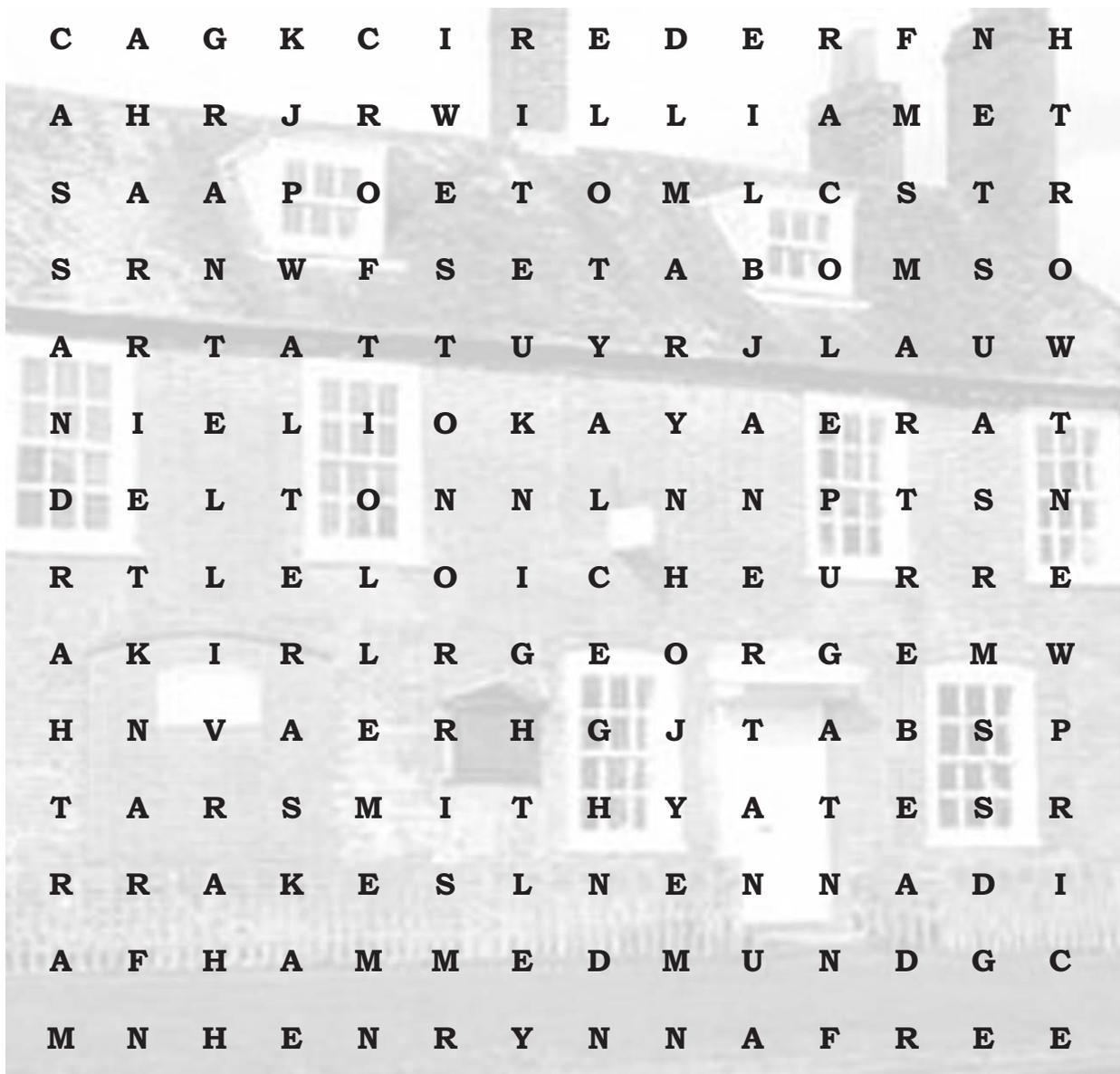
Can you find the words relating to Chawton Cottage, the people who lived with Austen, and the character names Austen created there? They may be backward; one is diagonal.

Chawton Cottage  
Mrs. Austen  
Cassandra  
Martha  
Emma  
Knightley  
George  
John  
Smith

Harriet  
Frank  
Jane  
Bates  
Elton  
Weston  
Cole  
Price  
Fanny

Bertram  
Edmund  
Tom  
Norris  
Grant  
Mary  
Henry  
Yates  
Pug

Wentworth  
Frederick  
Elliot  
Anne  
Walter  
William  
Harville  
Croft  
Clay



## In the Garden with Jane Austen

On September 12, GCR members and the public were the fortunate attendees at a



delightful talk in the Evanston Public Library by **Kim Wilson**, author of *Tea with Jane Austen* and *In the Garden with Jane Austen*. Kim is a member of the Wisconsin region and truly a font of knowledge of all things Austen. Our

thanks to Program Chair **Elisabeth Lenckos** for engaging Kim and to **Margo Goia** for a special “in the garden” cake.

As a clergyman, Austen’s father, Kim reminded us, “was neither rich nor poor and the Austens grew their own food and had flower gardens wherever they lived.” Gardens are mentioned in all six of Austen’s novels. The “characters who love nature are good.” Yet even Rushworth has an old-fashioned garden, Mr. Collins a parsonage garden, and General Tilney endless acres of kitchen gardens.

Austen’s heroines “take refuge, and find spiritual refreshment” in the out-of-doors: Elizabeth in the grove of Rosings, Fanny in the gardens of Mansfield, and Emma in the shrubbery of Hartfield. Life in a country house was far from private. (Even the Austens had a cook, a maid and an outdoors man.) Austen’s heroines “escape to the soothing influence of nature to gain privacy and indulge their emotions.”

“Gardens were the perfect settings for lovers, as young men and women were not to be alone, but could take a socially acceptable walk.” Proposals were made in the out-of-

doors: Bingley and Jane, Edmund and Fanny, Knightley and Emma, and Darcy and Elizabeth, the second time around. In Sanditon “the wealthy have a romantic view of cottage life; any house not a manor must be a cottage.” Chawton Cottage, to which Austen, Mrs. Austen, Cassandra and Martha Lloyd moved 200 years ago, “was not fancy, but good enough for respectable women to live in.” They had flower gardens, kept bees and made mead which, when properly made, was “very little inferior to champagne.”

Wilson showed beautiful pictures of the Cottage Gardens, City Gardens and Mansion and Manor House Gardens she has visited. These included upper class ornamented cottages, and small city gardens in Bath and London. The manor houses “were showplaces for the British elite.” Pemberly, as created by Austen, represents “the best of the grand English garden style.” She describes it as being 10 miles around. Chatsworth was 9 miles and Blenheim 11 or 12 miles around. Wilson also showed photos of Stoneleigh Abbey which Austen visited in 1806. Mrs. Austen wrote that it had a kitchen garden of 5.5 acres. We saw the view of the grounds from the Abbey much as Austen would have seen it. We saw photos of Godmersham, inherited by Austen’s brother Edward Knight, and Regency period engravings of it.

Wilson explained the importance of shrubbery walks (for shade for delicate ladies) and gravel paths which drained quickly (to keep the feet dry; “wet feet could kill you”). A ha-ha is a sunken fence, a depression in the ground, not visible from the house, but which restrains the animals from crossing. A wilderness is actually carefully planted woods with grass paths. Fanny may declare, “to sit in the shade on a fine day, and look upon verdure, is the most perfect refreshment.” Listening to Kim Wilson’s talk is the next best thing.

## Lost in Austen

This televised production is reviewed by GCR member **Shirley Holbrook**.

"I'm not hung up about Darcy. I do not sit at home with the pause button on Colin Firth in clingy pants. . . I love the love story. I love Elizabeth. I love the manners and the language and the courtesy. . . the stately, elegant rituals and pace of courtship." These are the sentiments of Amanda Price, feelings which open a portal for her into Longbourne and simultaneously allow Elizabeth to escape into Amanda's modern-day London. So begins Amanda's participation in *Pride and Prejudice*, unwillingly disrupting the plot and showing characters in a surprising new light.

Some of the resulting twists are fun and funny—learning that Mr. Bennet's first name is Claude, meeting Mr. Collins's dreadful brothers, hearing Amanda's judgment that Mr. Darcy is no Colin Firth. Other allusions to the Firth film include sly musical references to its theme music and a "post-modern" scene of Mr. Darcy emerging coatless from a dip in the pond at Amanda's request.

Some of the character changes extend our sense of Austen's people. Bingley and Lady Catherine respond to the Amanda plot complications in ways that may seem consistent with our knowledge of them. We see little of Elizabeth, but her reactions to our modern values and technologies seem plausible and her statement, "I was born out of time . . . and out of place" can't be dismissed too hastily. Other characters, Wickham in particular, depart radically from Austen's depiction.

Most problematic is Darcy. When Amanda suggests he needs an occupation and serves no purpose, he retorts, "What a disgusting idea. That is the *raison d'être* of society. We must be seen to be unoccupied." Earlier he has remarked, "Everywhere I behold the

squalid prospect of grasping arrivistes, harlots, and liars scrabbling over each other in the sewer that is existence outside society." His words and his role betray the most annoying elements of this film, the absence of Jane Austen's language, irony, and moral seriousness.

Amanda describes *Pride and Prejudice* as "the greatest love story ever told," and this



Jemina Rooper as Amanda

production gives us another opportunity to revel in the romance and enjoy the houses, gardens, and costumes. We can take the distortions of plot and character as a challenge to rethink and justify our understandings of the book. And an excuse to reread *Pride and Prejudice* is always welcome.

## Found in Chicago

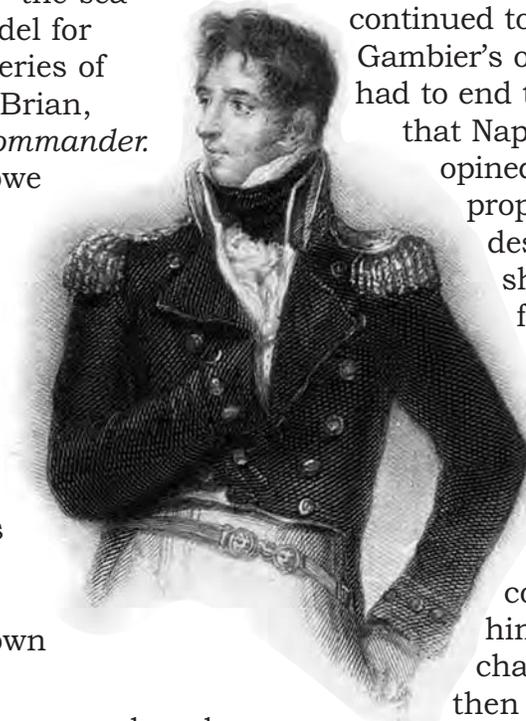
"Stately and elegant" also describe the "queen of Chicago society at the turn of the 20th century" **Bertha Honoré Palmer**. "(S)he was a champion of women's achievements, an ambassador for her fledgling city, and an international celebrity." Her art collection was the start of the world-renowned Impressionist collection at the Art Institute of Chicago. Those who care for fashion dare not miss the lovely exhibit at the Chicago History Museum, on view to January 4, featuring Palmer's gowns, coats and jewelry. One can even see her early 1890's calling cards. We know the effect on the Dashwood sisters of the calling cards left by Willoughby and Edward in London in *Sense and Sensibility*. In Palmer's day, according to the exhibit notes, "(e)ven after the invention of the early telephone, etiquette stated that one person would not expect to visit another person in their home without first leaving a calling card. If a calling card was not received in return, a request for a visit had been denied."

## Cochrane and the Austens

He was called *le loup de Mer*, “the sea wolf”. He is said to be the model for Captain Jack Aubrey in the series of maritime novels by Patrick O’Brian, beginning with *Master and Commander*. He was played by Russell Crowe in the movie of the same name, a movie that portrayed with amazing accuracy what it was like to be on a frigate during the Napoleonic era.

This year is the bicentenary of Capt. Thomas Cochrane’s exploits at the Battle of the Basque Roads (also known as the Aix Roads), a bay on the west coast of France near the port of La Rochelle and the town of Rochefort.

In April, 1805 the French fleet was anchored in the bay, behind a mile-long boom of heavy spars and chains. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Mulgrave, authorized an attack on the French with fireships, ships no longer usable except to be set afire and sent, as incendiary devices, into enemy squadrons. Cochrane, a mere post captain, was put in command of 21 fireships. His superior officer was Lord Gambier, Admiral of the Fleet, who opposed fireships as “a horrible and anti-Christian mode of warfare.” During the night of April 11, Cochrane added explosives to some of the fireships and set them off. The French boom was broken; their ships were dashed on the shoals and grounded in the mud ashore. Cochrane had one frigate. Gambier was 14 miles off with the rest of the fleet. In the morning Cochrane signaled Gambier to attack the floundering French. Gambier did nothing. Only by deliberately exposing his ship to fire from land-based fortifications did Cochrane induce Gambier to send 7 ships to Cochrane’s aid. Together they captured and destroyed many French ships.



But Cochrane’s colleagues were required by Gambier to return to the fleet. Cochrane continued to attack the French, despite Gambier’s orders. Finally on April 13 he had to end the battle. It has been reported that Napoleon, later at St. Helena, opined, “if Cochrane had been properly supported, he would have destroyed the whole of the French ships. . . French admiral was a fool, but yours was just as bad.”

Cochrane and Gambier were both members of Parliament which proposed a vote of thanks to Gambier for the victory. Cochrane protested and Gambier demanded a court martial to vindicate himself. Of Gambier it was charged, “the enemy’s ships being then on shore, and the signal having been made that they could be destroyed, [he] did for a considerable time neglect or delay taking effective measures for destroying them.” The court was stacked with Gambier’s friends, including Vice Admiral Sir Henry Edwin Stanhope whom Austen described to Cassandra in 1801 as “a gentlemanlike Man, but then his legs are too short, & his tail too long.” (Letter # 36, *Jane Austen’s Letters*, Deirdre Le Faye, Ed.) Gambier was “most honourably acquitted” and thanked by Parliament.

Now, we know Austen’s brother James’ first wife, Anne Mathew, who died in 1795, had a cousin, Louisa Mathew, who married James Gambier. And it was to Gambier that Rev. Austen wrote in 1798 on behalf of Austen’s brothers: for an appointment to a frigate for Charles, and for a promotion for Frank. In a letter to Cassandra, Austen quotes Gambier’s reply. He has contacted the Board of Admiralty on behalf of Charles, and Lord Spencer (Princess Diana’s ancestor, and First Lord of the Admiralty) for Frank.

In less than 2 weeks Frank was promoted to Commander of the sloop *Peterel*. (See Letters # 14, 15 and 16.) With Cochrane commanding the *Speedy*, they sailed the Mediterranean together. Later, from late August, 1801 to October, 1802, Frank was the Captain of the 98-gun *Neptune*, the flag ship carrying Vice Admiral Gambier.

Brian Southam in *Jane Austen and the Navy* writes, "To the end of his days Francis remained an alert and combatant sailor, in spirit, at least, keeping abreast of naval news and developments, and the fortunes of his surviving comrades. One book stirred him deeply, the first volume of *The Autobiography of a Seaman* (1859) by Thomas Cochrane, the Tenth Earl of Dundonald, now Admiral of the Fleet." Frank was not at the Battle of the Basque Roads. But fifty-one (yes, 51) years later he wrote a letter to Lord Dundonald who included portions in his second volume: "I have lately been reading your book ... and cannot resist the desire I feel of stating how much pleasure I derived from its perusal..." About the Battle of the Basque Roads he wrote: "I wish to say as little as possible which may inculcate the conduct of the Commander-in-chief, to whom, as you probably know, I owe a debt of gratitude for his kindness to me." But then Frank does just that. "I must, in conscience declare that I do not think you were properly supported, and that had you been so the result would have been very different. *Much of what occurred I attribute to Lord Gambier's being influenced by persons about him who would have been ready to sacrifice the honour of their country to the gratification of personal dislike to yourself, and the annoyance they felt at a junior officer being employed in the service.*" In 1863, at age 89, Francis was given the title of Admiral of the Fleet by Queen Victoria. His sisters would have been as proud then as they were in 1798 when Austen sent Cassandra the news of his earlier promotion.

## E-published

A letter signed J. Austen and posted from Literary Pantheon, The Great Beyond, Universe, Known and Unknown, to Seth Grahame-Smith, author of *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, was forwarded by our member **Cynthia Kartman** to Austenblog. The reviews and reactions of Austen and others in the pantheon are recorded. The letter ends, "In closing, let me congratulate you once again Mr. Grahame-Smith on the success of our work. If you ever wish to collaborate with me again without my consent, I would be honored. (Given the current vampire craze, you may want to consider adding a few bats to the belfry at *Northanger Abbey*.) After all, if I am not pleased with the results, I have ample means of conveying my displeasure. You see, I'm already dead. And I'm watching you."

## Best Sellers

*Sense and Sensibility and Sea Monsters* "by Jane Austen and Ben H. Winters" has joined *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* on the *New York Times* paperback best seller list. The *Times* asks, "Has the Jane Austen monster-mashup thing jumped the squid? Possibly. Amazon.com currently lists at least three Austen-related vampire books: *Vampire Darcy's Desire*, *Mr. Darcy, Vampyre*, and *Jane Bites Back*." Noting that Winters claims *Sea Monsters* is 60 percent Austen and 40 percent Winters, the *Times* comments: "No word on how they divided the money."

## The Color Yellow

Sensationalism is the essence of "yellow journalism." It all started over 100 years ago when a comic character called "The Yellow Kid" was published in the papers. *Letter from Chicago* had its own yellow moment with the printing of the summer issue on shocking-yellow paper. This was a mistake by our printer, pure and simple, and we apologize for our own bit of sensationalism.

LETTER FROM CHICAGO  
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**Birthday Tea**  
**Saturday December 12**

# Calendar

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- December 12** Jane Austen Birthday Tea. The Fortnightly of Chicago, 100 East Bellevue, Chicago. *First, Find a Good Place to Plant Potatoes: Tales of Chawton Cottage: 1809–2009*. The Readers' Theatre celebrates the bicentenary of Austen's move to Chawton in dialogue and images. 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
- February 20** Panel presentation and book discussion of *Northanger Abbey*. The Parthenon Restaurant, 314 S. Halsted St., Chicago. Noon–3:00 pm
- April 24** Annual Gala. *Horrors, Hats, and Helpless Young Heroines: Aspects of Northanger*. Maggiano's Little Italy, 111 W. Grand, Chicago. Continental breakfast and lunch. 9:00 am–3:00 pm

Our website is [www.jasnachicago.org](http://www.jasnachicago.org)