Join Us for Our Annual Spring Gala
Saturday, May 4, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

With our usual mix of thought-provoking presentations and other diversions...

Zachary Pinsent, "Dressing the Dandy," Mr. Pinsent will give us an overview of men's Regency clothing and the components of a gentleman's wardrobe shown through a dressing presentation with in-depth research of each piece and the story behind it.

Alicia Schult, "The Ins & Outs of Cosmetic Beauty & Regency Hair Care," Mrs. Schult will guide us through the morning toilette complete with the proper skin care
routine, precise and practical methods for the application of original cosmetics and what they were made from, as well as the importance of hair care during Jane Austen's time.

William Phillips' Diabolical Quiz

Gala Emporium

Woman's Athletic Club of Chicago
626 North Michigan Avenue, entrance on Ontario Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611

The Gala includes a delicious three-course luncheon featuring your choice of Filet Mignon, Grilled Salmon, or Griddled Polenta Cake, along with Baby Greens Salad and Mini Dessert Tart Sampler.

Tickets are $90 per person
To register online, click the button.

Register Here

Valet parking is available at The WAC for $20.
Seating is limited, so please sign up early.

To register by mail, please use the form below.

Spring Gala Pay-by-Mail Registration Form
Tickets: $90 per person

Name(s)____________________________________________________________
Address____________________________________________________________
City______________________State_____________________Zip______________
Email_______________________Phone______________Amt. Enclosed_________

Entrée choice (one per person):
____Filet Mignon ____Grilled Salmon____Griddled Polenta Cake

Please make check payable to JASNA-GCR. Mail form and check to: JASNA-GCR c/o Elizabeth Schraft; 175 N. Harbor Dr. Apt. 2506; Chicago, IL 60601

Zack Pinsent is the proprietor of Pinsent Tailoring, a one-man bespoke period tailoring business making garments from the 1660s to the 1920s. Based in Brighton UK, but with clients all over the globe, Pinsent Tailoring works closely with museums and private collections to...
Alicia Schult is the proprietress of LBCC Historical Apothecary. She has worked for museums writing grants, researching, curating, and founding a children’s history club. In her downtime, she has done vintage modeling and Marilyn Monroe & Lucille Ball impersonations, taught in a 1904 one-room schoolhouse, and worked in professional theater. In 2008 Mrs. Schult published *The Guide: To Sewing Your Own 18th Century Stays Using Your Own Custom Drafted Pattern*. Recently, she collaborated with well-known UK author, Susan Stewart on her book, *Painted Faces: A Colourful History of Cosmetics.*

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**Gala Emporium Vendors**

- Marigold Games
- JASNA-GCR Used Book Table
- Jane Austen Books
- LBCC Historical Apothecary
- Laura Whitlock Millinery
- Katy J’s Jewels
- Bonnets at Dawn

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**Volunteers Needed**

Lori Davis is currently seeking volunteers to create *Northanger Abbey*-themed centerpieces to grace each table at this year's JASNA-GCR Spring Gala. If you would like to volunteer, kindly contact Lori at lorimulligandavis@gmail.com
A Persuasion-themed centerpiece from the 2018 Gala.

We are also seeking reviewers and photographers for the Gala, Summer and Fall 2019 programs.
If you would like to help us, please contact Publications Director Laura Whitlock, lwhitlock@yahoo.com

Our Next Event

Summer Program
Pub Crawl and Trivia Contest with Bonnets at Dawn

From the
Regional Coordinator
Maureen Collins

“We are family. I got all my sisters with me.” Grammar issues notwithstanding, this line from the Sister Sledge song was a favorite of mine in the Disco era. While I may have retired my sequined jumpsuit and stacked-heel platforms, I still embrace the importance of family.

Not all families are the result of shared genes. Some of the best families are created by choice rather than accident of birth. I am fortunate to have many “families” in my life. JASNA has created yet another family for me.

The shared interests, experiences, devotion and yes, even obsession with Jane Austen has
led me to meet and form valuable friendships with people I might never have had the
opportunity to get to know otherwise. In raising an annual glass of champagne to a woman
long dead, I have had the chance to look around a gloriously decorated room and see
women (OK, and men) whom I have come to respect and admire. As part of the GCR
leadership team, I have met people who generously and graciously give up their time to
serve a larger purpose, who seek to educate and to be inclusive. Attending the AGMs--
seeing the costumes and the pageantry, listening to the academically challenging lectures--
has made me better understand what it means when people say that they have “found their
tribe.” My tribe, my family, whatever.

I feel so fortunate to have expanded my life to include a group of people who share my
passion, and who have taught me so much. Not just about 18th century life and literature,
but about comradery and sometimes courage. About finding new avenues to utilize talents
that were longing for a purposeful outlet. About having fun while wearing a large bonnet.

Like all good families, we may have the occasional difference or minor squabble, but in the
end we band together for a common purpose. I look forward to seeing you at the Gala, our
next “family reunion.”

From the
Program Director
Jennifer Swenson

I cannot help thinking that it is more natural to have flowers grow out of the head than
fruit.
--Jane Austen, Letters, June 11, 1799

I can tell that spring is upon us. The kids are all getting extra stir crazy, the dogs are wild to
be outside, and you can just feel a renewed energy in the air. I’ve even been so daring as to
think about what I might want to plant in my garden this year. Flowers? Or fruit? Maybe a
little of both!

All that pent-up excitement has gotten into our JASNA-GCR programming as well. At this
year’s Spring Gala, we have two very exciting speakers joining us! Alicia Schult of LBCC
Historical Apothecary will help us learn about the cosmetics and beauty rituals of the
Regency era. Zack Pinsent of Pinsent Tailoring will be coming to us from the UK. He will
lead us in a discussion and demonstration of men’s fashion in Austen’s time. This Spring
Gala is going to be very fashionable!
In addition to the fabulous line up for the Spring Gala, we have plans for an Austen-themed pub crawl for our Summer event. Let it not be said we are afraid of a little exercise to go with our fun. The ladies of the podcast Bonnets at Dawn will be hosting a Northanger Abbey and Austen-themed pub trivia contest for us. Who knows? Maybe we’ll come in Regency garb and really have a good time. So let’s all study up on our Tilneys and trapdoors and get our walking boots on so we can take the Chicago pub scene by storm!

Stay tuned for more details and, as always, we are happy to hear new ideas from each of you. Please feel free to contact me at programming@jasnachicago.org.

2019 Marks the Jane Austen Society of North America's 40th Anniversary

JASNA was founded in 1979 by Joan Austen-Leigh, Henry G. Burke, and J. David Grey. One hundred Janeites attended the society’s inaugural dinner on October 5, 1979, at the Gramercy Park Hotel in Manhattan. Since its founding, JASNA has grown to more than 5,000 members in 75 regional chapters.

Join us in wishing JASNA a happy 40th anniversary.

Winter Program Review

Mary Kravenas

On February 2, between bouts of wintery cold, Lloyd’s Chicago played host to the first JASNA-GCR meeting of the year. Attendees were greeted by Membership Secretary Becky Dolin, Regional Coordinator Maureen Collins, and Programming Coordinator Jennifer Swenson. Old friends and new acquaintances struck up conversations before before finding their seats.

Maureen Collins greeted attendees and made some opening remarks to kick off the year. Jennifer Swenson then took the mic and offered up a sneak peek of the events scheduled for 2019, including the upcoming Spring Gala on May 4th. Lori Davis next shared information recruiting volunteers for the creation of centerpieces for the Gala.

The speakers at our events are always a treat, but Danielle Spratt and Bridget Draxler were especially delightful. They took the stage and treated us to the story of how they met, which warmed and delighted every Janeite in the room. Their meeting in the Chawton House Library in 2011 was followed by rooming together at a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar, where GCR-favorite Devoney Looser was a mentor.
With that, the audience was already engaged, and Ms. Spratt and Ms. Draxler dived into their presentation, *Engaging the Age of Jane Austen*. For the audience, Austen and her life, society, works, and influence are topics we are well aware of and eager to discuss. You don’t have to tug our bonnets to get us to talk Jane. But for audiences that are not as invested, who may not see themselves and their experiences reflected at all in Austen’s works, new and fresh perspectives (Henry Tilney: Is Your Favorite Problematic?) and approaches (podcasts! YouTube series!) are showing how relevant Jane’s work is in the 21st century.

There’s almost never enough time when JASNA-GCR gets together, but there was time for a lively, albeit short, Q&A before lunches were finished and it was time to say goodbye.

The gala is just a month away, so reserve your space now, and see you on May the Fourth (be with you. This *Star Wars* girl cannot help herself.)

**Winter Program Highlights**

Jennifer Swenson and Mary Kravenas

**Jenny:** Mary! I am so excited that we’re doing a "Back and Firth" on JJ Feild...he’s so dreamy...I’ve started collecting things for the shrine....

**Mary:** Jenny, you know full well we’re doing this one on the 2007 adaptation of *Northanger Abbey* --NOT JJ Feild.

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https://mailchi.mp/a56f7945ae44/letterfromchicagoapril2019-2872209
Jenny: I know…it’s just that he keeps giving me these eyes...

JJ Feild as Henry Tilney, Northanger Abbey (2007, directed by Joe Jones)

Mary: You’re just going to have be strong on this one. So, we watched this whole movie together and the big theme we kept coming back to was--are we being too hard on Catherine Morland? I mean, she’s 17! Are we letting the narrator shade our opinion of her?

Jenny: Me? I’m never (always) influenced by the narrator! As an interesting aside, it is worth noting that Austen would have written Northanger Abbey initially while she was in her mid 20s. She, herself, had been a sheltered 17-year-old girl that was raised in a large, happy family not that long before. She then revised it during the last few years of illness shortly before her death at age 41. So, we have a work that is from the perspective of a woman still full of youth and health and promise for the future and then from the perspective of that same woman at the end of her life looking back at those naïve days. I remember being 25 and thinking I was so glad I wasn’t a silly 17-year-old anymore. Now, closer to 40, I can’t help but smirk at how clever that 25-year-old thought she was. I suspect Jane shook her head at herself a few times during that revision.

Mary: What I loved about this version of NA is how they depict Catherine’s imagination as she reads these novels. She’s placing herself at the center of these lurid fantasies inspired by the book and just gobbling it all up. It reminded me so much of being a teenager and having all this passion and excitement inside me for these new worlds that were opened up to through books. This adaptation constantly had me thinking about Catherine writing Mysteries of Udolpho fanfiction and writing moody poetry for her English teachers. Not that I’m talking from personal experience or anything. . .

Jenny: Yes! At first, it kind of turned me off. It made her seem flighty and unrealistic to me...until you started making those points. And I had to admit that, yes, this is in fact a pretty realistic picture of a 17-year-old girl.

Mary: I just had to remind you of our high school days.

Jenny: Though, I have to say that throwing Anne Rice in my face to win the argument was a bit below the belt...

Mary: That was your own fault, and you know it.

Jenny: Fair.

Mary: Along those lines though, like you said – my gut reaction to the whole Blaise Castle adventure was to be completely disgusted with how gullible Catherine was in letting John Thorpe push her into leaving when she had other commitments. However, after discussing it more, I think we’re being unfair.

Jenny: Yes, I agree. I was almost annoyed with how lazy it felt to make her such a pushover. But then, I started thinking about myself at that age. This poor girl is away from her support system for the first time in her life. Her moral compass has never been put to the test. The people into whose care she’s been placed have encouraged and endorsed a relationship with the Thorpes. Her older brother is telling her that she is wrong to refuse to go with them. I’m not sure I would have been able to withstand that pressure (well meaning as it might have been) like that at such a young and untried age.

Mary: Also! Catherine’s main example of a romantic relationship is her parents -- who appear to have a very healthy, flirtatious, and loving marriage. Not only is Cate a young woman figuring out what makes her heart beat faster (in books, in her imagination, in the real world) but she also doesn’t know to be skeptical. She hasn’t had to know. This isn’t Elizabeth, or a Dashwood sister, or even Lydia. Catherine is almost completely without guile.

Jenny: And then she meets the “perfect” man, and by that I mean JJ Feild.

Mary: Falsworth! Howling Commandos forever.

Jenny: Wrong fandom. But yes, into Catherine’s life steps Henry Tilney -- who, of all of
the Austen heroes, could be considered the one with the most feminine-coded traits. He identifies with his mother and sister not his brother and father, he expresses interest in the daily affairs of women he knows, he knows his fabric and even helps his sister pick out a dress! And the best part for our heroine -- he’s straight! Henry is the best friend in a romcom that is there to pick up the pieces when the bad boy breaks the heroine’s heart...

**Mary:** But you also get the sense that his interest and words aren’t always sincere. I don’t want to say he’s patronizing… but if the shoe fits. The problem is that it’s the nice patronizing -- like he’s not haughty about it. He *nicely* talks to Mrs. Allen about how much he saved on muslin for Eleanor’s dress and the poor woman never even realizes he’s making fun of her.

**Jenny:** Worse, he does it to Catherine also. There are many examples, but that whole trip to the Abbey where he “delights” her with his gothic stories feels like he’s laughing at her out of the side of his mouth and she isn’t totally in on the joke. Do I even dare to share that we wondered aloud if this was a glimpse at the early days of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet?

**Mary:** Yes! Do it! I’m sure our readers will forgive us!

**Jenny:** Okay...here it goes: Do you think Catherine and Henry have a shot at long-term happiness? Are Catherine and Henry a young Mr. and Mrs. Bennet? I can’t stop thinking about this line from Mr. Bennet: “I know your disposition, Lizzy. I know that you could be neither happy nor respectable, unless you truly esteemed your husband; unless you looked up to him as a superior. Your lively talents would place you in the greatest danger in an unequal marriage. You could scarcely escape discredit and misery. My child, let me not have the grief of seeing you unable to respect your partner in life.”

![Mrs. and Mr. Bennet, Pride & Prejudice (1995)](https://mailchi.mp/a56f7945ae44/letterfromchicagoapril2019-2872209)

**Mary:** I felt like we were indulging in some very wicked speculation with that. I vote that we agree our Tilneyes will be very happy and have many babies with no inheritance entailed away!
**Jenny:** Agreed! Let us end this with the firm belief that Catherine matures into a strong, clever woman that is more than an equal for her wry husband and the two end with a delightful and fulfilling life together.

*Felicity Jones, Northanger Abbey (2007)*

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### Upcoming Events

**Jane Austen at South Whitley Community Public Library**
Thursday, May 2, 2019 6–6:30 PM

201 E Front St, South Whitley, IN 46787

**Emma**
May 24 – July 14, 2019
A world premiere based on the novel by Jane Austen
Adapted by Phil Timberlake
Directed by Elise Kauzlaric

**11th Annual Jane Austen Festival:**
*Northanger Abbey—Adventure and Romance Unmasked*
July 12-14, 2019

Historic Locust Grove, Louisville, Kentucky
For tickets and more information, visit [www.jasnalouisville.com](http://www.jasnalouisville.com)
Making his Lifeline playwriting debut, ensemble member **Phil Timberlake** joins ensemble member **Elise Kauzlaric**, director of 2012's *Pride and Prejudice* and 2016's *Northanger Abbey* for a fresh, intimate look at this beloved Austen romp. [Visit Lifeline Theatre](http://www.lifelinetheatre.com/)

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**JASNA Annual General Meeting: 200 Years of Northanger Abbey, "Real, Solemn History"**
October 4-6, 2019

Williamsburg, Virginia

For more information, visit [www.jasna.org/agms](http://www.jasna.org/agms)

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**Join JASNA: Membership is open to everyone interested in the life and works of Jane Austen.**

Benefits of membership include:

--A subscription to *JASNA News*, the Society’s newsletter, which is published three times a year and includes news, feature articles, and book reviews
--Our annual journal, *Persuasions*, a leading source for Austen studies
--Membership in one or more of our regional groups
--An opt-in email subscription to JASNA’s monthly e-bulletin and other timely announcements
--An invitation to attend the Annual General Meeting, our "members-only" three-day conference
--Advance notice of tours to England tailored for JASNA members

*To register, or for further information, please click on the image below.*

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**Artwork Credits**

Gala card: *Man in front of a psyche mirror*, fashion plate from *Journal des Dames et des Modes*, 1800; Gillray, James, *Progress of the Toilet- the Stays*, from *The Caricatures of*

If you would like to receive the printed black-and-white version of the Letter from Chicago you may subscribe to our 2019 publications by sending this form, along with a check for $10, payable to JASNA-GCR to: Elizabeth Schraft; 175 N. Harbor Drive; Apt. #2506; Chicago, IL. 60601

Name__________________________________________________________
Address__________________________________________________________________________________________
City________________________________State_____________________Zip__________

Letter from Chicago
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