



# The Jane Austen Society of Australia ~ Brisbane

*"I declare after all there is no enjoyment like reading."*



## Program of Meetings for 2020

### The Zen of Jane: Buddhist Lessons from the Books of Jane Austen - 8 February

A novel and enlightening look at Jane Austen as Zen master. How do we look at literature through new filters, and what does a nineteenth century writer who probably never thought about Buddhism have to teach us about matters of mindfulness? Our guest speaker **Walter Mason**, author and spiritual tourist, looks at how far Buddhist thought had entered Austen's era and how reading her might prove thoughtful lessons in wisdom, quietness and loving kindness.

### Jane and Me: My Austen Heritage - 16 May

Imagine growing up in Chawton House, England and walking the corridors where Jane Austen walked, sitting at the same dining table and even eating from the same china. Despite the lack of her physical presence, Jane Austen was ever present in the four walls of the great family home, Chawton House. We are very happy to welcome **Caroline Jane Knight**, fifth great niece of Jane Austen who will share insights into her unique upbringing in Chawton House until the age of 18 years old and her motivations behind establishing the Jane Austen Literary Foundation.

### The Strength of Fashion of any Old Pelisse: Recreating Jane Austen's pelisse - 4 July

What did Jane Austen wear? The only known garment associated with the beloved author is a brown silk pelisse-coat in the collection of Hampshire Council. Following an excellent presentation last year on the myths and realities of Regency clothing, we again welcome **Hilary Davidson**, dress historian and curator to speak about recreating Jane Austen's pelisse, including by reference to evidence from Austen's letters about her tastes in colours and fabrics. Like a detective story, Hilary will share insights from her investigations into the history, context and physical qualities of the coat and reveal new information about the object and its wearer.

### Health, Happiness and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Old Maid - 22 August

*"Single women have a dreadful propensity for being poor"*, Jane Austen once observed. To be poor was to be vulnerable. To be ill was to become dependent on others who perhaps could not be entirely relied upon. Single women simply could not afford to become ill. Guest speaker, **Joanna Penglase**, long-time member of JASA and editor of refereed journal *Sensibilities*, will take a look at the experience of single women - "old maids" in sickness and in health in Austen's era.

### Seaside Follies: An Excursion to Sanditon - 10 October

**Michael Biddis**, Emeritus Professor of History from Reading University and his partner, **Louise Dilloway**, former teacher of English and Drama will present this talk which analyses the nature and significance of Austen's unfinished work, *Sanditon*, combined with semi-dramatised readings from the text. Both Michael and Louise have experience in theatrical activity in Hampshire with Alton Fringe Theatre. The talk comes highly recommended by well-known Austen author, Maggie Lane.



Meetings commence at 1pm, conclude at 3pm and include Afternoon Tea

Venue: St Colombs, 23 Victoria Street, Clayfield

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