



# **The Jane Austen Tour**

## **Winchester and Bath, 17 - 22 August 2007**

### **IFUW Post-Conference Tour**

#### **OVERVIEW**

Members of the Winchester and Bath Associations of Women Graduates welcome you to "Jane Austen country".

You will stay right in the heart of the historic cities of Winchester, the ancient capital of England, and Bath. Accommodation has been reserved for you at the one of Winchester's oldest and most highly regarded hotels, within easy (and mostly flat) walking distance of the main places to visit, e.g. the early Norman Great Hall, with "King Arthur's" Round Table, and the reconstructed medieval Queen Eleanor's Garden; museums (including the City Museum and several military museums like the Gurkha Museum); the medieval Butter Cross; and the famous Winchester Cathedral, a glory of Romanesque and Gothic architecture, which boasts the longest nave in Europe.

Three days later, you are taken by bus to Bath, via Stonehenge. Bath is set in a bowl of surrounding hills beside the River Avon in beautiful countryside. It has the only natural hot-water springs in the United Kingdom and these springs deliver approximately 13 litres/second at about 46 degrees centigrade. Bath was, of course, the site of a large Roman settlement and extensive excavation in the 1880s revealed the extent of the Roman baths and temple (close to the present Abbey Church in the centre of Bath). Now, one can wander around the baths and temple site, under the streets of the present-day town. In the 18th century, vast numbers of people came to Bath to take the waters; the beautiful streets and crescents built then still survive and are responsible for Bath's designation as a World Heritage site. The Assembly Rooms and Pump Rooms are examples of the beauty and style of Georgian buildings.

#### **ITINERARY**

##### **Friday, 17 August**

- Travel on executive bus for your round trip from Manchester; this spacious 49-seater bus will have air conditioning, seatbelts and a WC, as well as a hot and cold drinks machine.
- In the early evening, the Mayor of Winchester will give a Civic Reception for the party at Abbey House (the Mayor's house). This will be followed by dinner at the Winchester Royal Hotel.

##### **Saturday, 18 August**

- *Morning:* Visit the museum that was formerly Jane Austen's home at Chawton, near Alton, which she shared with her mother and sister, Cassandra, for many years. You will be able to spend approximately 90 minutes here.
- *Afternoon:* Take part in a 1.5-hour guided walking tour of the city. There will also be time for shopping, sightseeing or relaxing. An information pack with maps will be provided.
- *Evening:* Several members of the BFWG Winchester Association will join you for a sherry reception and a Centenary Dinner in a private room at the hotel. (There is no extra charge for this special event.)

### **Sunday, 19 August**

- *Morning:* Enjoy a free morning to sleep in, go for a walk, or attend a service in the Cathedral or one of the local churches. Jane Austen is buried in Winchester Cathedral and the house where she died (privately owned) is on an adjoining street, near Winchester College. There is also a very pleasant walk to the 12th century Hospital of St Cross, about a mile along the banks of the River Itchen; this walk was the inspiration for Keats in writing his "Ode to Autumn".
- *Afternoon:* Members of the local association will take groups for a drive in the beautiful Hampshire countryside to see some of our delightful villages, many with thatched cottages and ancient churches. Meet up at the Water Gardens at Longstock, near Stockbridge on the River Test; tea will be available for those who want it.
- *Evening:* Dinner will again be in the restaurant at the Royal Hotel.

### **Monday, 20 August**

- *Morning:* Travel by bus to Bath via Stonehenge, where you will have an opportunity to see this fascinating Stone Age circle, one of the wonders of the world - and have a coffee break. When you reach Bath you will be taken straight to Pratt's Hotel, where a light lunch will be waiting for you.
- *Afternoon:* After lunch take a short walk across Pulteney Bridge, with its interesting little shops, and along Great Pulteney Street to Sydney Place. Here you will visit one of the houses where Jane Austen stayed when in Bath, and hear a talk by one of the members of the Jane Austen Society. Then you'll be revived with a cream tea (scrumptious scones with jam and thick cream) in a Georgian hotel.
- *Evening:* In the early evening there will be a one hour walking tour with a Mayor of Bath's Guide, who will show you more of Bath, from medieval buildings such as Sally Lunn's Refreshment House and Museum (home of the world famous Sally Lunn Bun) which was built about 1483, to the mainly Georgian city-centre. The walk will be followed by dinner at Pratt's Hotel.

### **Tuesday, 21 August**

- *Morning:* Visit the Assembly Rooms, where you will have a chance to see the fascinating Museum of Costume. There will also be an hour-long open-top bus tour of the city centre, which will give you an interesting overview of this historic city.
- Lunch will be in the famous Pump Rooms where a trio will be playing light music while you eat. There will also be a chance to tour the Roman Baths, where it is fascinating to see the water from the natural hot springs pouring out with great force, as well as the later Georgian Baths. (The new Thermae Bath Spa was opened in August 2006, so one can now take the waters again, indulging in a treatment in the spa waters for approximately £20 for a two-hour visit; there are warm and hot baths, steam rooms and an open roof-top pool. You would need to book this separately, as it is not included in our tour.)
- *Afternoon:* Enjoy a free afternoon to wander around the town. You can walk along Milsom Street and other streets mentioned in Jane Austen's novels, such as *Persuasion* and also *Northanger Abbey*, which is set mainly in Bath.
- *Evening:* Dinner at Pratt's Hotel.

### **Wednesday, 22 August**

- *Morning:* After breakfast you will be taken back to Manchester by executive bus.

## ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation in **Winchester** is at the Winchester Royal Hotel, which was originally a medieval nunnery and still retains a secluded peaceful garden. Twin-bed rooms have been reserved as it is thought most people will want to share, but there are a few single occupancy rooms available, which will cost an extra £20 per person per night. The three-star accommodation is in either the old building or on the ground floor of the modern new extension. Accommodation includes breakfast and dinner.

Accommodation in **Bath** is at Pratt's Hotel (three-star), a sister hotel to the Winchester Royal Hotel. There are a limited number of single rooms available, which cost an extra £10 per night. Accommodation is on a full board basis, so all your meals are included for this part of the trip; drinks are not included, however.

## TOUR COSTS

Option A: Shared twin-bedded room:	£510.00
Option B: Single accommodation:	£590.00

Please note:

- All travel is included in the quoted price.
- The package prices are for shared twin bedded rooms or for single/sole use rooms in both Winchester and Bath; you cannot book single accommodation in one place and not the other.
- The organisers reserve the right to cancel the tour if the minimum number of participants (20) is not reached.

Book early as there are only 30 places available on this tour.

*Useful websites: <http://visitwinchester.co.uk> & <http://visitbath.co.uk> & <http://englishheritage.org.uk>*