

# Jane Austen's Christmas: The Festive Season in the Georgian Era – Claire Walsh Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018



"Christmas weather". Austen, Jane. *Emma*. London: George Allen, 1898, page 112.

Before the Victorians reinvented it, the traditional Christmas was a very different affair. Devoid of Father Christmas, Christmas trees and commercialisation, the emphasis was on gentility, tradition and sociability. Jane Austen set many scenes from her novels during the Christmas period exactly because this was a time for social gatherings. We'll look at the balls, parties, dinners, games, traditions and celebrations that filled the festive season. Novels, letters, paintings and engravings are used to bring the Georgian Christmas to life.



Claire is based just outside Cambridge.

Having previously worked at the Victoria & Albert Museum and lectured for the University of Warwick, she now lectures for the Open University and lectures widely in Britain; at the Courtauld Institute of Art, Victoria & Albert Museum and Museum of London amongst others, and to specialist groups including the NACF, the Ceramics Society, the Costume Society and the Ancient Monuments Society. She also lectures in Europe, the USA (including Yale and the Huntington) and Canada and has numerous publications in academic journals and edited volumes.

