



Jane Austen Society of North America Vancouver Chapter

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JASNA's own members entertain JASNA Vancouver

February Meeting: Jane Austen's Robbie Burns

Leith Davis is a professor at Simon Fraser University and, as Ronald Sutherland pointed out in his introduction on February 16, 2013, she provides dynamic leadership to the Centre for Scottish Studies in her role of director. Jane Austen was working on the draft of a novel we now know as *Sanditon* in 1817, and Dr. Davis quoted a phrase from this in the title of her illustrated talk, "Ever There Was a Man Who Felt": Jane Austen's Robert Burns.

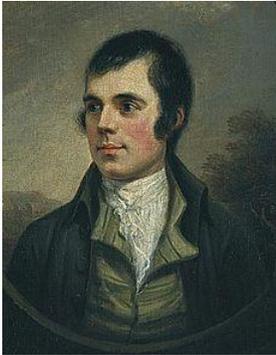
But while we are on the subject of Poetry, what think you Miss H. of Burns Lines to his Mary? – Oh! there is Pathos to madden one! – If ever there was a Man who *felt*, it was Burns. – Montgomery has all the Fire of Poetry, Wordsworth has the true soul of it – Campbell in his pleasures of Hope has touched the extreme of our Sensations – “Like Angel’s visits, few & far between.” Can you conceive any thing more melting, more fraught with the deep Sublime than that Line? – But Burns – I confess my sence of his Pre-eminence Miss H. – If Scott *has* a fault, it is the want of Passion. – Tender, Elegant, Descriptive – but *Tame*. – The Man who cannot do justice to the attributes of Woman is my contempt. – Sometimes indeed a flash of feeling seems to irradiate him – as in the Lines we were speaking of – “Oh! Woman in our hours of Ease” –. But Burns is always on fire. – His Soul was the Altar in which lovely Woman sat enshrined, his Spirit truly breathed the immortal Incence which is her Due. – “I have read several of Burn’s Poems with great delight, said Charlotte as soon as she had time to speak, but I am not poetic enough to separate a Man’s Poetry entirely from his Character; -- & poor Burns’s known Irregularities, greatly interrupt my enjoyment of his Lines. – I have difficulty in depending on the *Truth* of his Feelings as a Lover. I have not faith in the *sincerity* of the affections of a Man of his Description. He felt & he wrote & he forgot.” “Oh! no no – exclaimed Sir Edw: in an extasy. He was all ardour & Truth! – His Genius & his Susceptibilities might lead him into some Aberrations – But who is perfect? – It were Hyper-criticism, it were Pseudo-philosophy to expect from the soul of high toned Genius, the grovellings of a common mind. – The Coruscations of Talent, elicited by impassioned feeling in the breast of Man, are perhaps incompatible with some of the prosaic Decencies of Life; – nor can you, loveliest Miss Heywood – (speaking with an air of deep sentiment) – nor can any Woman be a fair Judge of what a Man may be propelled to say, write or do, by the sovereign impulses of illimitable Ardour.” This was very fine; – but if Charlotte understood it at all, not very moral – & being moreover by no means pleased with his extraordinary stile of compliment, she gravely answered “I really know nothing of the matter...”

(Minor Works, Oxford University Press, Chapman Edition, p 397-8)

Sir Edward Denham’s comic wooing of Charlotte Heywood is Austen’s spoof of romantic era courtship, but it reveals her considerable familiarity with Burns’ poetry and character, and, possibly, her attitude to his career. Robbie Burns was a young man of many amours, and “poor Burns’s known Irregularities” are Austen’s coded description for the romantic entanglements which inspired his poetry and songs and complicated his life. He was born in 1759 in Ayrshire, and his first work which survives was a song dedicated to *Handsome Nell* in 1774. Later, he joined the Tarbolton Bachelor’s Club, as, being in love, he qualified for membership. He would have circulated his poetry to his friends, in manuscript. In 1785 he dedicated a poem to his bastard daughter Elizabeth, born to Elizabeth Paton, a serving girl. During this period Jean Armour’s father forbade the couple to marry, although she was pregnant with Burns’ child.

To Mary in Heaven is dedicated to Mary Campbell, a dairy maid:

“How sweetly bloom’d the gay, green birk* (*birch)
How rich the hawthorn’s blossom
As underneath the fragrant shade
I clasp’d her to my bosom!
The golden Hours on angel wings
Flew o’er me, my Dearie;
For dear to me, as light and life,
was my sweet Highland Mary.”



By 1784 he was writing on themes of nature, love, social commentary, depression and friendship, and received critical acclaim for his volume of *Poems, chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* which was published in 1786, quickly re-printed, and widely circulated. He was lionized in Edinburgh for his talent, charm and good looks and this led to a period of dissipation and more amorous complexity.

In December, 1786, Henry MacKenzie, writing in the *Edinburgh Lounger*, called Burns a “heav’n-taught ploughman” who possessed “the spirit as well as the fancy (i.e. imagination) of a poet.” This, however, was a romantic view which does not coincide with the facts of Burns’ education. It is true that Burns had known hard work and privation as the son of a Lowland tenant farmer, and he wrote:

“To plough, sow, to reap and mow,
My father bred me early O!”

Yet his father engaged a tutor to teach him and his brothers English literary culture, French and Latin. Leith, in her PowerPoint presentation, showed the title page of Masson’s Collection of Prose and Verse for Use in Schools which would have introduced Burns to Shakespeare and many other classics. He learned mathematics, was an avid reader and, as indicated above, began to write poems and songs when still a school boy. He likely read the Scottish poets such as Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson, in addition to Montgomery and Campbell whom Austen refers to but who are not so well known today. Dr. Davis referred to Burns as “bicultural”, and his education exposed him to standard English. At the same time, he would have been surrounded by Scottish singing and oral culture, which, although not Gaelic, would have had a different vocabulary and accent from the English. At home, he would have heard the songs and oral vernacular of Scotland from his mother, Agnes Broun. In fact, Burns sometimes combined English and Scots in the same poem.

Leith suggests that Jane Austen would have viewed Burns as a “moral thermometer”, and posed the question, “Where did she get her information?” The most likely source is The Works of Robert Burns with an Account of His Life and a Criticism on His Writings, by James Currie, the first volume of which appeared in 1800, four years after Burns’ death of rheumatic heart disease. Currie’s account ultimately ran to four volumes, and was reprinted (and pirated) on both sides of the Atlantic many times. Currie wrote:

“Endowed by nature with great sensibility of nerves, Burns was, in his corporeal, as well as his mental system, liable to inordinate impressions, to fever of body, as well as of mind . . .perpetually stimulated by alcohol . . .(it) became habitual; and the powers of life began to fail. He who suffers the pollution of inebriation, how shall he escape other pollutions? But let us refrain from the mention of error over which delicacy and humanity draw the veil.”

Currie was a teetotaler, but he admired Burns’ compositions and lamented the poverty which dogged him because he never attracted a Scottish patron. Due to the success of his biography and the collected works, Currie was able to provide some financial support to Burns’ widow and children. (Ed note: Burns had fifteen children, six of them born out of wedlock, but he loved them and accepted paternity.)

As to Burns himself, he became a Scottish hero in his own lifetime. He left Edinburgh in 1788 to marry Jean Armour and took up farming near Dumfries, but it was a great struggle. Like many others, he was sympathetic to the early ideals of the French revolution and was a patriotic Scot. He wrote radical poetry, which was increasingly dangerous, especially after the British suspended habeas corpus in 1793 when war broke out with France. Burns was paid for his published poems, and when he was hired as an Excise man was ultimately able to give up farming. During this period he was asked to collect old Scottish songs and airs, and for this he accepted no money, although he travelled about widely. He contributed about 200 pieces to the Scots Musical Museum, having amended or written some of his best-known lyrics such as *Auld Lang Syne*. Another example is this verse from *Scots, wae hae*:

“By Oppression’s woes and pains
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!”

In her concluding section, Dr. Davis compared the careers and legacies of Burns and Austen. In her view, Austen is “sense”, while Burns is “sensibility”. She was from the middle class, and he from the working class, but they were both on the margins of privilege. They were both keen observers of human nature, and expressed similar views on the foibles of the upper classes. They were very different authors, her genre the novel, his poetry and song, but both were capable of biting satire. An evening party in which they were both present would have crackled.

Leith mused on a number of questions: Would Jane have envied him the fame he achieved in his lifetime? Would she have admired his rise from a modest background? Would she have envied him his choices and his freedom? In *Sanditon* she is connecting “his known irregularities”. Would this, ultimately, have been her attitude?

“Burns,” said Leith, “was a bad boy, and sex sells.” She then set us pondering some additional questions: How much should biography influence how we read literature? How much should we judge a poet’s work by his private life? She pointed out that biographies do provide context, and that it is possible to love the poetry without loving the poet.

Whatever conclusions we draw, the works of both Austen and Burns have popular as well as academic appeal. Around the world, there are Burns Clubs and Jane Austen Societies. The appeal of Jane Austen’s fictional characters endures down the ages. His compositions continue to stir the imagination of Scots at home and throughout the diaspora, and they celebrate Burns Night on January 25, the anniversary of the birth of this Scottish national icon. Nationalism flourishes, and celebrations are planned next year to mark the 700th anniversary of Robert Bruce’s victory over the English at the Battle of Bannockburn.

Meeting Report by Sandy Lundy

Further reading:

The Bard: Robert Burns, a Biography, by Robert Crawford, professor of Modern Scottish Literature at the University of St. Andrews. Published in 2009 by Jonathan Cape, London.

The Collins Classics edition of the Complete Poems & Songs of Robert Burns was republished in 1995. It has two interesting introductory essays, plus a chronology of Burns’ life, and a glossary in the margins which gives the definitions of unusual words. There is an accessible index to titles and first lines.

Congratulations to Keiko Parker on the publication, in Japan, of her translation of *Emma*. This accomplishment was the subject of an illustrated article in the Summer 2013 issue of JASNA News. Keiko has been a member of the Vancouver Region for many years, and served as our Coordinator.

March Meeting: Panel Discussion on Jane Austen's Grandparents

At this meeting, four members of JASNA Vancouver -- Phyllis Bottomer, Adele Shaak, Joan Reynolds, and Lorraine Meltzer -- involved us in a spritely discussion. They gave papers full of scholarly insight, or high inventiveness, or sly humour, or other engaging qualities.

Adele Shaak spoke about Mrs. Jennings, the matriarch and grandmother in *Sense and Sensibility*, and gave many examples of her bossiness, snooping, gossiping, teasing, impertinence, and insensitivity, summing up these behaviours with the pithy "this is pathological!" Mrs. Jennings serves the author's purpose as the device by which Col. Brandon's story is advanced, albeit inaccurately. But! There is another side to Mrs. Jennings, as her tender heart is stirred by Marianne's hysterics when she is jilted by Willoughby. She offers the great treat of a glass of Constantia wine, as just the remedy for its "healing powers on a disappointed heart." This reference was one of many bonuses provided during this morning, as Constantia wines were among the greatest luxuries of the age. Produced in the vineyards of South Africa, they were prized throughout Europe by kings and emperors such as Frederick the Great and Napoleon, who ordered it from his exile on St. Helena. Adele, therefore, summed up with a more charitable view of Mrs. Jennings, who, she felt, could have been relied upon for generosity to her grandchildren, and liberality in such matters as school fees.



The next character to be discussed was Mr. Woodhouse in *Emma*, who, like Mrs. Jennings, was not the kind of hands-on grandparent we are likely to encounter today. **Phyllis Bottomer** is the regional coordinator of JASNA Vancouver, chair of JASNA's travelling grants committee, and a speech language pathologist of many year's experience. She reprised a talk which she gave at our AGM a few years ago, and it is given here in its entirety.

Grandpapa Woodhouse

Mr. Woodhouse is the only one of Austen's male characters that delights in the role of grandfather. We hear him refer to "dear little Henry" and "dear little John" whereas we never hear Sir Walter Eliot even mention the existence of little Charles or Walter Musgrove. However, Mr. Woodhouse is better suited to being a grandfather than he is a father. His very high levels of anxiety will not limit his grandchildren's lives as they have limited Emma's.

His anxiety and abhorrence of change do reduce his time with his five beloved grandchildren, however, as Mr. Woodhouse never ever undertakes the sixteen mile trip to London. All the onus of travel is on the John Knightley family even though setting off with five young children has its challenges whether in the 1800s with carriages and nursemaids or now-a-days with car seats and charges for excess luggage. We are told that little Emma, at 8 months of age, is paying her first visit to Hartfield so this is the first time she has been met by her mother's family. For the sake of the children's health, the Knightley family has spent their most recent holiday at the coast. Even though the ocean breezes bring in much cleaner air than what he fears in London, Mr. Woodhouse did not consider what is now called an inter-generational holiday. He and Emma could have joined John and Isabella's family at the seaside especially given that Emma, at past twenty years of age, has never seen the ocean. This is not due to cost, employment constraints or lack of proximity. She hasn't because it has never occurred to her father that her interests or pleasures might be different than his own.

In the first few pages of *Emma* Jane Austen succinctly describes Mr. Woodhouse as a gentleman who has "habits of gentle selfishness and of being never able to suppose that other people could feel differently from himself." She also states that he is "a nervous man, easily depressed...hating change of every kind." Furthermore he "could not meet [his daughter] in conversation, rational or playful" and has been "a valetudinarian all his life, without activity of mind or body."

In my opinion, these behaviours and traits of Mr. Woodhouse's are compatible with his being at the mild to moderate end of what we now refer to as the autistic spectrum (which includes both classic autism and Asperger's syndrome). As these and other quotations show, he appears to exhibit four common characteristics of an autistic spectrum disorder: limited *theory of mind*, severe anxiety, gastro-intestinal issues and communication difficulties.

Limited Theory of Mind

The introductory statement about Mr. Woodhouse's inability to understand that his feelings are not held by everyone reveals that he lacks what we now refer to as *theory of mind*. Jane Austen twice states this crucial insight into his personality telling us that "His own stomach could bear nothing rich, and he could never believe other people to be different from himself. What was unwholesome to him, he regarded as unfit for anybody." This leads to a distortion of the Golden Rule to 'do onto others as you would have them do onto you' as he applies it too literally. He truly does love his intimates as he does himself so he tries to protect them from situations and even foods that he finds noxious.

Although Emma knows him so well, even she is at times startled at how oblivious he is to the feelings and pleasures of others. Her father is not able to relate even to the readily apparent joys of a bride or of happy children. Despite Mrs. Weston's "cheerful enjoyment" of married life he continues to refer to her as "poor Miss Taylor". Similarly he is distressed by the rough-housing that his grandsons delight in with Mr. Knightley.

"And then their uncle comes in, and tosses them up to the ceiling in a very frightful way!"

"But they like it, papa; there is nothing they like so much. It is such enjoyment to them...."

"Well, I cannot understand it."

Adoring her father and unfamiliar with many other adult role models, Emma tries to reassure him that "That is the case with us all, papa. One half of the world cannot understand the pleasures of the other." While that may be true of the vast variety of specialized hobbies and interests such as golf, bridge, boxing or even membership in a Jane Austen Society, it is not true of the universal pleasures of life such as falling in love or childhood play. Most people understand those.



Gentle Mr. Woodhouse has no desire to inflict an insult or hurt deliberately. However, he and others with similar theory of mind limitations often do so unintentionally. When the party at Coles is first under discussion he chooses not to attend. "I am not fond of dinner-visiting, said he--- I never was. No more is Emma. Late hours do not agree with us." He presumes to speak for them both, not just himself. Few twenty year olds can have been given less opportunity to find out if they do like to party! Once he agrees to Emma attending he then wants her to leave early until it is painstakingly explained to him that doing so would insult the hosts.

Daily Mr. Woodhouse damages or limits those he loves when he does not see them as separate from himself with different needs, let alone desires. His negative impact on others, although it arises from the best of intentions, has been a puzzling paradox which has led Richard Jenkyns (2004) to refer to him as "so amiable and yet a monster---the genius of the portrayal lies in just this, that both things are true."

Anxiety

Researchers note that autism "has long been seen as a problem of faulty or different arousal responses to environmental intrusions." In the novel there are three or four examples of each of the aspects of his environment which provoke anxious reactions from Mr. Woodhouse. What are some of the things that make him nervous?

Weather: His anxiety about any slight change in weather patterns is so extreme that he is capable of declaring “It rained dreadfully hard for half an hour, while we were at breakfast. I wanted [the Westons] to put off the wedding.” Such cancellations for rain would be very hard here on the West Coast!

Rich food: He is concerned about the ill effects of many edibles, especially “...the wedding cake, which had been a great distress to him.” If he had his way, when his grandsons visit for an extended number of weeks, they would be fed on gruel and baked apples thus returning to their parents far less healthy than when they came. Many of us here remember hearing Dr. Catherine Morley, a dietician, speaking about how some children of this period were kept on such limited diets that they were quiet and complacent due to malnutrition.

Noise and Large Gatherings: Mr. Woodhouse endeavours to warn Emma away from a party saying “There will be a great many people talking at once. You will not like the noise.” Many people on the spectrum find too much sound is beyond the limit of what their sensory systems can process. Again, this may reduce his time with and enjoyment of his grandchildren. Mr. John Knightley comments to Emma that “I am aware that they may be too noisy for your father.”

Change or Novelty: From reports written by persons with autism it seems that they experience intense stress because many aspects of the world, particularly living in community, are so difficult to understand. Their confusion leads to “fear, anxiety, worry, and even panic.” Therefore, one of the ways that they cope is to withdraw or to stick to the security of routines. Mr. Woodhouse exemplifies this rigidity in minor ways such as the number of turns he takes on his winter walk and in major ones like his utter misery when he learns that his closest friend wishes to marry his daughter. It is amazing that he ever acquired any grandchildren at all as he must have been similarly distraught when Isabella married John! He certainly is trying to avoid adding to the number!

Gastro-Intestinal Issues

The terror of rich food that Mr. Woodhouse experiences high-light the digestive problems which have been noted to co-exist with autism spectrum issues in some individuals. The research by Dr. Martha Herbert, a pediatric neurologist at Harvard, and others, indicates that, in some cases, the symptoms of autism may be indicative of a neuro-inflammatory disorder affecting the immune system and gut as well as the brain.

Communication Difficulties

Mr. Woodhouse speaks well without articulation errors and with an adequate vocabulary and appropriate grammar. However, to me as a speech language pathologist, there are numerous examples of his difficulty processing complex language in real time. Mr. Woodhouse shows some awareness of his difficulty with rapid speech and his sensory issues when he comments to Emma about Mrs. Elton that she “..speaks a little too quick. A little quickness of voice there is which rather hurts the ear....I do not like strange voices.”

On the third page of the novel Jane Austen tells us that he has weaknesses in conversation both “rational or playful”. The word ‘rational’ may refer to the limited content of his conversation and to the fact that, when he is anxious, there is little that is reasonable about the thoughts that he conveys. Mr. Woodhouse does not enjoy unfamiliar topics or the rapid exchange of ideas; indeed, he is noted to be “always the last to make his way in conversation”. Making decisions based on processing complex information is a particularly daunting task for him. When his input is invited into plans to switch the proposed dance from Randalls to the Crown Inn, Emma “was obliged to repeat and explain it, before it was fully comprehended.” With more challenging issues, those who care for him have learned to sidestep the lengthy process necessary to obtain his full comprehension. Mr. Knightley, when he has some business dealings with his neighbour, moves onto other topics “as soon as Mr. Woodhouse had been talked into what was necessary, told that he understood, and the papers swept away.” Fortunately, in this case, he is being manipulated by an honourable man who has his best interests at heart. Others on the autistic spectrum have not always been as fortunate.

The second word, ‘playful’, is an indication that Mr. Woodhouse is often not able to appreciate verbal humour, idioms or teasing remarks as well as would be expected. For example, when he is talking about the need to pay his respects to a new bride, knowing his dislike of the changes that marriage brings, Emma gently teases him

that “It is encouraging people to marry if you make so much of them.” Mr. Woodhouse is very puzzled, starts to grow “nervous, and could not understand her.”

Although Emma feels that Mr. Elton’s written charade is quite a simple one, in order for her father to grasp it, she “read it to him, just as he liked to have anything read, slowly and distinctly, and two or three times over, with explanations of every part as she proceeded.” She functions like a capable special education assistant, rather than as a daughter, particularly by slowing down the speed of the language input and by providing concrete explanations to assist him to make the necessary mental connections.

Many on the spectrum have trouble with the subtleties of social register and learning the important but unwritten rules that accompany the formalized ones. For example, as he prepares to leave for his daily walk, Mr. Woodhouse offers long “protracted apologies and civil hesitations” when his neighbour has dropped by as he does several times most days. Mr. Knightley finally exclaims “My dear sir, do not make a stranger of me.” as such excessive formality is inappropriate between those who know each other so well.

Fortunately these language processing challenges will not affect his relationship with his grandchildren at their stage of life. As is obvious from Henry and John “asking every day for the story of Harriet and the gypsies” and not wanting it to vary “in the slightest particular from the original recital”, young children are more tolerant of hearing the same story repeatedly. Also, they will only spend small amounts of each year in their grandfather’s home. It is Emma who has spent almost every evening of her teenage years sitting playing backgammon with her father while listening over and over again to his limited conversation.

Although Mr. Woodhouse means well and is described as “everywhere beloved for the friendliness of his heart and his amiable temper”, his anxiety and digestive concerns have for years dominated the social life of his very small community. Various critics have recognized the negative effects of this on his family. Marvin Mudrick referred to “his tenacious clinging to Emma...[like] a parasitic plant”. The limits he places around his daughter led Richard Jenkyns to refer to him as a “blood-sucker”. These strong judgments result from Mr. Woodhouse’s obliviousness as to how his behaviour affects those he loves. However, Gilbert Ryle reminds us that Mr. Woodhouse’s “intentions are kindly and his objectives are not concealed... he is not a schemer.”

However, his beloved Emma is at great risk of having her youth, her possibility of marriage and her freedom to experience life limited to the point of subtle deformity. I feel that she lives as a Bonsai tree, cherished and beautiful but constricted. Fortunately, his effect on the next generation will be essentially positive. Little Henry, John, Bella, George and Emma plus their future cousins will have memories of a gentle elderly man who smiled upon them, listened to their anecdotes, enjoyed their “many pretty ways”, thought that they were all “remarkably clever”, and loved them unconditionally.

Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer is the author of “So Odd a Mixture: Along the Autistic Spectrum in *Pride and Prejudice*,” London, Jessica Kingsley, 2007

References:

Richard Jenkyns, *A Fine Brush on Ivory*, Oxford University Press, 2004

Gilbert Ryle, “Jane Austen and the Moralists” in *Critical Essays on Jane Austen*, edited by B.C. Southam, London, Routledge, p 106-22, 1968

Marvin Rudrick, *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery*, Princeton University Press, 1952

Grandparents continued

The next two speakers, **Joan Reynolds** and **Lorraine Meltzer**, had written sequels to *Pride and Prejudice*. Joan's paper featured Sir William and Lady Lucas as the proud grandparents of Charlotte's twin boys, William and Charles. Sir William, she predicted, would indulge them with toys and sugar comfits, and "tell them great tales of his knighthood, life at court, and all the great people he knew." Here is a further excerpt:

"One of the joys of having grandchildren is of course boasting of their achievements to one's friends and neighbours. Lady Lucas spent a great deal of time irritating Mrs. Bennet with stories of the early accomplishments of the twins, as well as repeatedly musing out loud as to Charlotte's cleverness in producing 'an heir and a spare -- all in one sitting' thereby creating absolute security of tenure over the Longbourn estate, once Mr. Bennet had passed on. Mrs. Bennet, of course, put these remarks in their proper place with reminders of the superior wealth and position of her two elder daughters, and the achievements of their own offspring -- adding for emphasis that with the arrival of each grandchild, Mr. Bennet seemed to acquire new life and vigour -- and so was likely to live for many years to come!"

Joan embellished Lady Catherine's grotesque image, but she foresaw that once that self-important lady was gathered to her Maker, Charlotte would have a contented life as a happy mother and chatelaine of Longbourn. Moreover, she predicted a happy middle age, and comfortable old age, for Sir William and Lady Lucas.

The last speaker was Lorraine, who spoke of Familial Relationships in *Pride and Prejudice* and emphasized the sense of impending crisis and financial hardship which pervades the novel. She gave an extensive analysis, pointing out that, in her view

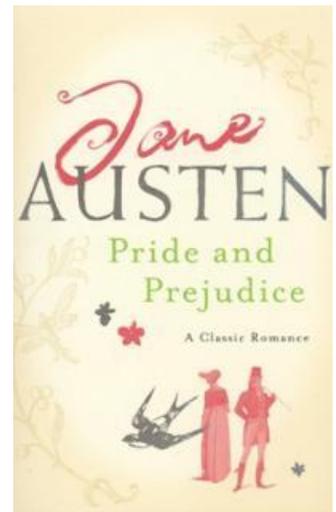
"It is impossible to surmise what kind of grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Bennet would be without examining their relationship to each other and to their daughters. As Mr. and Mrs. Bennet age, their relationship remains distant. It cannot be described as companionable because there is still the wide gap in intellectual curiosity and respect. The financial worries no longer cause anxiety for Mrs. Bennet, because she knows that either of her two elder daughters will provide for her, Mary, Catherine and Lydia's family. She does continue to worry about having to leave Longbourn, however, because it has been home to the Bennets all of their lives; losing it would be a great blow."

In Lorraine's final summing up, an edited version of which is given below, she predicts a very different end for Charlotte Collins:

"I like to imagine an alternative future. Mr. Collins will inherit the place; there is no recourse under law. However, when I consider that Charlotte was twenty-eight when she married, and that medical care was rudimentary, it is feasible that Charlotte could die in childbirth. (I'm sorry for the morbid thought!) As a clergyman with an established position, it would be incumbent on Mr. Collins to find another wife. Who would be a better choice than Mary Bennet? She 'worked hard for knowledge and accomplishments and had neither genius nor taste, with a pedantic air and conceited manner.' In other words, a perfect wife for Mr. Collins. In fact, when Elizabeth turned down Mr. Collins' proposal, Mary was disposed to be asked by him. She thought more highly of him than the others did, and thought he was solid, although not as clever as she was, but that could be improved by her example. Mary would still be young enough to have a healthy pregnancy and bear a son. Longbourn would remain in the Bennet-Collins family."

A hearty round of applause expressed our appreciation to the panelists.

Meeting report by the Editor, with many thanks for notes provided by Colleen Griffin.



Jane Austen Day, April 13, 2013

Iris Lutz on Jane Austen's Houses & John Atkins on Georgian Architecture

Jane Austen's Houses

On this occasion, Susan Olsen was mistress of ceremonies, and she welcomed everyone, including guests from Victoria and Baltimore. To begin the program on a suitable note, Phyllis Bottomer read descriptions of Barton Cottage and Northanger Abbey.

Iris Lutz, who is the international president of JASNA, was the morning speaker. Her given name inspired our blue theme for cut flowers, place mats, napkin rings, programs, and other festive decorations. The title of her talk was, "in proportion to their family and income..." *Houses in Jane Austen's Life and Fiction*. "Her aim," she said, "was to give a virtual tour for people who can't go there." She would show us places where Jane Austen lived or stayed, and speculate on which of these houses might have inspired fictional locations.¹ In the novels, Jane mentions many real places, such as Bath, Portsmouth and Lyme, but never named real houses, as she didn't want readers to speculate on specific individuals or families as models.

The first scene was of the medieval church of St. Nicholas in Steventon, Hampshire, where Jane's father, The Rev. George Austen, was rector, and where Jane was baptized in 1775. It is a tranquil place, and the 800-year-old tree, where the Austen family hid the church key, still stands. The rectory, in which Jane lived from 1775 to 1801, no longer exists, but a sketch and a woodcut do survive. An update on an archaeological dig at the site, which began in 2011, is in the Summer 2013 issue of JASNA News. Mr. Austen had a salary of £600 per annum, and took in students, so it is estimated that, including family and servants, between 15 and 22 people lived in the house during his tenure.

Iris then moved on to a discussion of Tudor or Jacobean manor houses dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, remarking that these were nestled in valleys, invariably located near a river. This is understandable, if one reflects that a country estate of the era, with the family and all their staff and retainers of servants, gardeners, grooms, agricultural labourers, dairymaids, shepherds, brewers, blacksmiths, and many others, would make up a sizeable settlement. Often these houses had grand apartments to accommodate visiting royalty and, given the turmoil of the age, might be moated for defense. Northanger Abbey would be an example of a house of this type, as would Donwell Abbey. Emma's view of Donwell, for instance, "is...of a house (in) its suitable, becoming, characteristic situation, low and sheltered -- its ample gardens stretching down to meadows washed by a stream..." (Chapman, p 358). Jane attended lavish balls held in the stone gallery of the Vyne, the ancestral home of the Chute family. Now owned by the National Trust, it is a grand 18th century "stately home", with a 16th century house at its core. Those rooms have linenfold panelling, decorated with Tudor roses.

The restoration of peace following the Civil War brought with it increased physical security, and great changes in domestic architecture. After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, William and Mary ascended the throne, followed by Queen Anne, and these monarchs inspired new, charming, symmetrical styles for houses. The beginning of the Georgian Era in 1714 saw the introduction of an elegant, restrained facade, with the mansion built on rising ground, surrounded by landscaped gardens and parks. Architects were inspired by the ideal forms of classical antiquity, employed in the designs for 16th century Italian villas by Andrea Palladio. Wealth from the expanding empire, and commercial activity of all kinds, flowed into England, so that an estimated 840 large country houses were built between 1710 and 1800.

We know the names of a good many houses and locations which were familiar to Jane Austen during her lifetime. She could walk the distance of about a mile to Ashe House, the home of the Rev. George Lefroy, and Jane's particular friend Anna. Ibbthorpe House was the home of Mary and Martha Lloyd, and Jane and Martha were described as "great walkers". Either of these houses, with their elegant, restrained interiors, could be the model for

¹ Ed note: In the Oxford University Press edition of the novels, R.W. Chapman gives "An Index of Characters, etc." and lists these as "Feigned Places" with helpful page numbers.

Hartfield, in *Emma*. In 1797 the household of Jane's brother, Edward Austen Knight, moved into Godmersham Park, a Palladian mansion in Kent. Over the next fifteen years Jane stayed at Godmersham many times, able to “shake off cares of vulgar economy” and enjoy a luxurious life style. It is sometimes surmised that Chatsworth, the great seat of the Dukes of Devonshire in Derbyshire, is the model for Pemberley, but Iris does not agree with this. She thinks Godmersham is the more likely model for Darcy's estate.

Jane and her family would have been guests at Manydown Park, the home of their neighbours, the Bigg-Withers. This house no longer exists, but we are fortunate to be able to see a surprisingly large number of houses which the Austen family knew during their lifetime. Surprising, because of a series of circumstances which Bill Bryson points out in his recent historical survey, *At Home*. During the 1870s, a dire agricultural crisis arose in Britain, and at the height of it the government brought in crushing death duties which were, over time, the death knell of many agricultural estates. Death duties rose to a staggering 60% by the 1930s, and to pay these and maintain the houses,

treasures of every kind were sold, and ultimately many structures were demolished. Bryson says, “By the 1950s, stately homes were disappearing at the rate of about two a week.” Current research by the Victoria & Albert Museum, among others, indicates that in the century preceding 1975, 2,000 country houses were lost. Godmersham Park, for instance, survives as a college for the British Association of Dispensing Opticians.



Engraving of Manydown Park

In 1801, the Rev. George Austen retired, and the family moved to Bath; their income of £600 continued, and they lived in spacious accommodation in Sydney Gardens. But when Mr. Austen died in 1805, their income was reduced to £450, making it necessary to move to Green Park Buildings and ultimately, by 1806, to a very seedy part of town, Trim Street. In the Bath novels, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, many real places are mentioned, as well as fictional ones, and the more elevated the situation, the more prestigious the address. Sir Walter Eliot is comfortable in Camden Place, while Mrs. Smith lives in Westgate Buildings, in the old, unhealthy, lower part of town. Iris told us that the gravel walk, which connects Union Street to Gay Street, and where Anne and Wentworth were reconciled, is still, today, “a peaceful place for a stroll”.

In 1806, Mrs. Austen and her daughters visited Stoneleigh Abbey in Warwickshire. This was one of the ancestral homes of her family, the Leighs, and, as the grandest house Jane probably ever saw, may have been the model for Sotherton Court, Mr. Rushworth's estate in *Mansfield Park*. Also in 1806, Jane spent five weeks over the summer at Hamstall Ridware in Staffordshire, where her first cousin, the Rev. Edward Cooper, was rector. Some people think he may have been the model for Mr. Collins, but in any case the description Mrs. Jennings gives of Delaford could just as easily describe Hamstall:

Stoneleigh Abbey



“Delaford is...a nice old fashioned place, full of comforts and conveniences; quite shut in with garden walls that are covered with the best fruit trees in the country...Then there is the dove-cote, some delightful stewponds,* and a very pretty canal...it is close to the church...a butcher hard by in the village, and a parsonage-house within a stone's throw.” (*Sense & Sensibility*, Chapman p 196-7) (*fishponds)

In 1807 and 1808 the Austen ladies were living in Southampton and Godmersham, but in 1809 Edward Austen and his brothers arranged for them to occupy Chawton Cottage on his estate near Alton in Hampshire. Now-a-days it is occupied by the Jane Austen House Museum, but here Jane was able to resume writing, and lived until a few months before her death in 1817. By modern standards it is a very substantial house, dating from the 17th century, but it may have provided inspiration for Barton Cottage, which is described thusly:

“As a house, Barton Cottage, though small, was comfortable and compact; but as a cottage it was defective, for the building was regular, the roof was tiled, the window shutters were not painted green, nor were the walls covered with honeysuckles.” (S&S, Chapman p28)

Chawton Manor House dates from the Elizabethan era, and at the time that Jane Austen knew it, the exterior was probably whitewashed plaster, but now the underlying stone and brick shows through. Many rooms are panelled in wood, and a fine Jacobean staircase survives. This house and estate have been through many of the hard times described above. From 1879 onwards, inheritance taxes and running costs started a long period of decline, involving the sale of most of the outlying manor and subdivision of the house into flats. It was inherited by Richard Knight, who is a direct descendent of Edward Austen Knight, and in 1993 the American philanthropist Sandy Lerner established a charity which bought a 125-year lease on the house and grounds. Then began ten years of substantial restoration to transform it into the centre known today as Chawton House Library. Its contents, library, and staff are a boon to those pursuing Austen and 18th century studies.

Iris Lutz concluded her presentation with the thoughts she had when visiting the room at 8 College Street, Winchester, in which Jane Austen died. In her mind's eye, Jane is sitting at a desk by the window, with the towers of Winchester College in the distance, and a view into the headmaster's garden.

Report written by Sandy Lundy, with many thanks for notes provided by **Lorraine Meltzer**.

[Town and Country – A Look at Georgian Architecture](#)

John Atkins, a well-known Vancouver tour guide, heritage consultant and graphic designer, gave an engaging and informative overview of the history, architecture and features of some of the town and country houses built in England in the Georgian era.

Before the Great Fire of London in 1666, a typical house in London was wooden, built cheek by jowl with its neighbours, and often overhanging the street. After the fire, laws were passed that required homes to be built in brick or stone, with their size related to the width of the street. Architects such as Inigo Jones and the Adams brothers began to build in a new classical style that was clean, crisp and balanced. They were strongly influenced by the Palladian style, which takes its name from Andrea Palladio, the Italian author of *The Four Books on Architecture*, published in 1570. Palladio valued the details, proportions and symmetry of the classical architecture of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Balance, scale and proportion became important.

Among the larger London houses from this period were Chiswick House, designed by the Earl of Burlington, Somerset House, the town house of the Earl of Somerset, designed by Inigo Jones and torn down in 1775, and its replacement, new Somerset House, designed by William Chambers.



Queen's House, Greenwich
(first English Palladian house)

The Building Act of 1774 consolidated legislation passed since the fire, and amongst many other requirements and restrictions, introduced four types of building construction in the City of London, graded by value and floor area. A "First Rate" house was the largest, valued at over £850 and over 900 square feet in floor area, and was usually four storeys. Second, third and fourth rate houses were successively cheaper, smaller and less impressive, with a fourth rate house qualifying as a "hovel".

The Act eliminated fly by night builders, and led to improved quality of construction. Houses were built in rows, with a single façade for a number of homes, often featuring one entrance that was dominated by a large pediment, which the developer hoped would impress potential buyers, while other entrances were more modest. Brick houses were often plastered, with the plaster scored and painted to look like stone. There was a small strip of land between

the house and the sidewalk, with stairs up to the main floor, and light wells to let light into the basement (some Vancouver townhouses being built today look remarkably similar at pavement level.)

The Act also led to the development of London's elegant squares, with their stylish terraces that are so admired today. Squares were laid out around a park or garden, which were used by developers as a tool to market the houses around them. Examples include Red Lion Square (with its misleading prospectus), Cleaver Square (notable for its lovely plainness), Russell Square and Bedford Square.

London in the 17th century was a relatively small city, and as it grew it began to surround estates owned by the Duke of Bedford and the Russell family, the Duke of Westminster, and other wealthy families. As a result, they came to own large and very valuable parts of London. The houses in the squares and other properties they developed on their estates were leased, not sold. It is still possible to own the "ground rent" for a house, without owning the property itself.

A town house designed by Robert and James Adams for Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn was discussed in some detail. The first floor included a parlour, courtyard and stables, with the kitchen in the basement, while the second floor was primarily for entertainment. The floors above provided bedrooms for the family, while the attic accommodated the servants. The interior design was notable for its pastel finishes, with repetition of ornate plaster details giving them a pleasing simplicity.

Country houses featured large, landscaped grounds, with long driveways designed to reveal the house in a dramatic fashion as the visitor approached. Blackburn House, which has recently undergone a prize winning restoration, was described as "clean, crisp and balanced", and "a perfect country house", with generous proportions and large grounds.

In Bath, John Wood used classically simple Palladian architecture to create the famous Circus, laid out around a private lawn for use by the residents. The view from a path below the wall that marks the boundary of this lawn provides a carefully planned view of the Circus.

We are fortunate that in the 1930s a photographic record was made of many of the Georgian squares and houses in London, many of which were destroyed by World War II bombing. Today, many Georgian houses are listed as heritage properties. Some are being restored, removing modifications and additions made in the Victorian era, and returning them to their original clean, crisp and balanced appearance.



Blackburn House

*Many thanks to **Richard and Helen Spencer** for this summary.*

In Memoriam

Our sincerest condolences are extended to Juliet McMaster and her family, on the passing of her beloved husband Rowland this past summer. A graduate of the University of Toronto, he taught English at the University of Alberta for 35 years. Members of JASNA Vancouver will remember meeting him, when he gave a super talk at Jane Austen Day, 2011. It was reflections on a line in *Persuasion*:

"I hate to hear of women on board." Women Aboard War Ships.

May Meeting: Emma Spooner on Jane Austen and Fanny Burney

On May 18, 2013, Susan Spooner gave a spirited reading from Jane Austen's *Love and Friendship*,² as an introduction to her daughter Emma's presentation of Cultivating Sense from the Cult of Sensibility: The Influence of Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth in Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*. "*Love and Friendship*," said Emma, "demonstrates Austen's early engagement with the popular sentimental novels of the time which often illustrated irrational behaviours of young women. The satirical epistolary work was a burlesque parody of the extreme sensibility of young females found in novels of the late 18th and early 19th centuries."

During several adventures, Laura and Sophia, the two principal young ladies in *Love and Friendship* react to both significant and insignificant events by violent exclamations of sorrow or delight, often falling into each other's arms in fainting fits. In the case of Sophia, swooning ultimately proves fatal after she slips into unconsciousness on wet grass and catches a chill. Sophia's last words to Laura demonstrate the inimitable ability of Austen to satirize the sentimental novel when she causes the girl to exclaim, "...beware of fainting fits ...Though at the time they may be refreshing and Agreeable yet believe me they will in the end, if too often repeated & at improper seasons, prove destructive to your Constitution... One fatal swoon has cost me my Life...Run mad as often as you chuse; but do not faint--." (Chapman p102)

According to Spooner, "Sophia's giving way to passion foreshadows Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* and the character of Marianne Dashwood whose weakness for dead leaves and doctrines of love at first sight are not too far from Sophia's behaviour."

While *Sense and Sensibility*, the first of Austen's published novels, is also engaged with love and friendship and the emotions they engender, Austen introduces a new type of heroine who, while sensitive, does not feel it necessary to constantly drop to the ground in a fainting spell or to turn from violent love to violent hate within minutes.

"While still femininely modest," said Spooner, "Austen's characters are able to grow in understanding. Although also focussed on friendship and marriage, they are capable of navigating the world on their own." While Austen rewrites the romantic novel and promotes a new model of femininity, she was not the first female author to satirize the irrational behaviour of female characters. She clearly was, in her *Juvenilia*, influenced by many of the novels she read and, in maturity, continued to look to women novelists such as Maria Edgeworth and Frances Burney, writers who were also critical of the cult of extreme sensibility.

"From her letters and in the frequency with which Austen rewrote various novels," Spooner noted, "it is apparent that she enjoyed reading Burney, Edgeworth and other authors but, more significantly, she also adapted their ideas into her own writing." Among Austen's other adaptations are included *Sir Charles Grandison* from *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* by Samuel Richardson published in 1753. Austen was a fan of Grandison, although her play reduces Richardson's seven-volume work down to a small skit. (Some believe that others in her family contributed to the work.)

Austen's first novel *Susan*, later re-titled *Northanger Abbey*, satirizes the Gothic novels of the time and relies heavily on Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, a popular work in the Gothic tradition. Emma Spooner pointed out that Austen gently ridicules Mary Brunton's 1811 novel *Self Control and Discipline* in a letter to her sister, Cassandra:

"I am looking over *Self Control* again and my opinion is confirmed of its being an excellently meant, elegantly written work, without anything of Nature or Probability in it. I declare I do not know whether Laura's passage down the

² Ed note: In her presentation, Emma refers to the fact that around 1790, when Austen was fifteen, she collected her early writings into three manuscript notebooks, and Professor R.W. Chapman dubbed this collection *The Juvenilia*. *Love and Friendship* and many other comic novellas appear in *Minor Works* which was first published by Oxford University Press in 1954.

American River is not the most natural, possible, everyday thing she does.” In September, 1814, Austen wrote to her niece, “I have made up my mind to like no novels really but Miss Edgeworth’s, yours and my own.”

In reality, Spooner explained, Austen admired numerous contemporary and earlier novelists, especially Frances Burney, whose influence on Austen proved “strong and lasting”. Jane Austen even wrote a continuation of Burney’s novel *Camilla* and described her partiality for it in her letters, although she was critical of its length.³ “Burney was a very popular and successful female author,” noted Emma. “She was an ideal model for Austen who may have tried to emulate Burney’s achievements.” In fact, when Austen’s father George submitted her novel, *First Impressions*, to a publisher, he described it as comprising two volumes “about the length of Miss Burney’s *Evelina*.”

While novels were a well-established literary form by the late 18th and early 19th centuries, their respectability was still open to question. “Reading novels was considered a dangerous practice, particularly for young women,” said Spooner. “Growing numbers of both men and women readers and writers were reading novels over the course of Austen’s lifetime; however, it was still often condemned as a frivolous activity at best and suppression was widespread, according to Alan Richardson in his 1994 book Literature, Education, and Romanticism: Reading as Social Practice 1780-1831.”

Emma pointed out, however, “that times were changing, and Burney’s *Evelina* was an instant success, generating four printings within the first year of publication. Some criticism of women’s novels and their proliferation of ‘unnatural characters and improbable circumstances’ came from the tendency of the early writers to create characters designed to illustrate a particular virtue or vice. Austen’s approach to the novel was very different and she is often credited with perfecting a new trend in novel writing; realistic fiction with complex and realistic characters.”

Sir Walter Scott wrote in praise of Jane Austen, “That young lady has a talent for describing the involvement and feelings of characters of ordinary life which is to me the most wonderful I have ever met with.” Other authors such as Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding also created realistic novels and characters with a mixture of good and bad qualities. However, in Emma Spooner’s opinion, it was still uncommon to have characters with flaws as well as virtues.

“Austen may owe the foundation of her technique to Burney,” Emma elaborated. Fanny Burney wanted to write a novel which replicated and exposed real life. She constructed characters and situations which are, on the whole, ordinary and realistic. Burney laid the groundwork for the exacting realism of Austen’s novels by establishing the popularity of the novel which doesn’t rely on painting characters as entirely flawed or virtuous. This was a significant move forward, because both Austen and Burney heroines, heroes and villains display complex behaviours which can be understood in the light of contemporary social structures. They are not just seen in the context of their innate flaws or virtues. Both Burney and Austen suggest in their novels that the negative behaviours of their characters can have their foundation in societal pressures, a radical departure from most popular fiction of the time. The sense of reality is enhanced in Burney’s novels when female characters recognize that they need to provide food, shelter, and funds for their own existence. This theme continues into Austen’s fiction, where several female characters have exactly the same concerns; money is also an essential part of Austen’s novels. For instance, the entail on Mr. Bennet’s estate throws the whole future of the Bennet family into question and drives Mrs. Bennet’s enthusiastic search for husbands for her daughters.

“Both Burney and Austen,” Emma continued, “invoke a new social order by endowing their heroines Cecilia and Elizabeth Bennet with a sense of their own dignity and personal worth when faced with potential suitors whose elevated situation in life would seem to make such alliances impossible. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth’s family connections are a problem for Lady Catherine de Bourgh, but rather than accepting Elizabeth’s social situation as too inferior to make her a potential mate for Darcy, Austen writes the story in a way that reflects Lady Catherine’s pomposity and vanity. In essence, the various references to Fanny Burney’s works within Austen’s novels alone

³ Ed note: Emma called *Camilla* a “door-stopper”.

denote her extreme appreciation for Burney's plots. The manifest parallels between *Cecilia* and *Pride and Prejudice* indicate a level of involvement which goes beyond references."

As a result of her study and analysis, Spooner believes that Burney opened for Austen the means of expressing the social reforms Austen had already described in her *Juvenilia*. Emma concluded her insightful presentation by quoting Jane Austen's own defense of the novel, which she wrote in *Northanger Abbey*: "It is Belinda, or Camilla, or Cecilia, or in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour are conveyed to the world in the best chosen language."

Emma answered questions on Fanny Burney and also on the novels of Maria Edgeworth. She is currently at work on her doctoral studies at the University of Calgary and her thesis will have an Austen connection.

Many thanks to Laureen McMahon for providing the meeting report on which this account is based.

These explanatory notes are from the Oxford Companion to English Literature:



Fanny Burney (Frances, Mme d'Arblay, 1752 – 1840)

Lived in her youth in that London society which included Dr. Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, Garrick, etc.

She published her first novel, *Evelina*, anonymously in 1778. She published *Cecilia* in 1782, and in 1786 was appointed second keeper of the robes to Queen Charlotte.

In 1793 she married a French general, d'Arblay, a refugee in England.

In 1796 she published *Camilla*. Her three major novels take as their theme the entry into the world of a young girl of beauty and understanding but no experience...they display, with a satirical eye and a sharp ear for dialogue...the varied company in which she finds herself.

Marie Edgeworth (1768-1849)

Eldest daughter of a wealthy Irish landowner who had 22 children by four wives. She received some schooling in England, and her first publication was Letters to Literary Ladies 1795, a plea for women's education. She visited London in 1801, and was feted by the literary world, meeting Byron and Sydney Smith among many others. Jane Austen sent her a copy of *Emma*.

Altho' not considered as a novelist of first rank she appears to have initiated, in *Castle Rackrent*, both the first fully developed regional novel and the first historical novel in English...among others she published *Tales of Fashionable Life* in 1812.



[A Note from Aileen Hollifield:](#)

In September, 2012, we introduced, at our Vancouver JASNA meetings, a practice I had seen in Australia, of commencing with a short extract from one of the novels. In Australia they feature a specific novel each year. We are going to finish up this year with extracts from *Pride & Prejudice*, and then concentrate on *Mansfield Park* next year.

There will be sign-up sheet at meetings and I will be twisting as many arms as possible to pick a favourite passage to read. Here is a round-up of the selections chosen to date:

September 2012, Barbara Phillips read from *Pride & Prejudice*: "it is amazing to me," said Bingley, "how young ladies (to)...the sick lady and her sister. (Chapman p 39-40, Chapter 8, Volume 1).

October 2012, Mary Atkins read from *Emma*: Mr. John Knightley (to)...was the handsome reply. (Chapman p 92-94, Chapter 11, Volume 1).

November 2012, Susan Olsen read from *Pride & Prejudice* : Mr. Bingley was good looking and gentleman like (to)... Elizabeth delighted in anything ridiculous. (Chapman p 10-12, Chapter 3, Vol.1).

December 2012, Pam Ottridge read from *Persuasion*: She had only time, however (to)... enter your father's house this evening, or never. (Chapman p 236 to 238, Chapter 11 of Volume 2, which would likely be in Chapter 23 of any paperback edition).

February 2013, Joan Reynolds read from *Pride & Prejudice*: After playing some Italian songs, Miss Bingley (to) ...danger. (Chapman p 51-52, Chapter 10, Volume 1).

March 2013, Helen Spencer read from *Persuasion*: We shall never agree upon this question (to) ... replied Wentworth, surprised. (Chapman p 233 to 240, Chapter 11 of Volume 2, which would likely be in Chapter 23 of any paperback edition).

April 2013, Phyllis Bottomer read descriptions of Barton Cottage (S&S), and Northanger Abbey.

May 2013: Susan Spooner read from *Love and Friendship* in *Minor Works*, on the dangers of fainting.

June 2013: Aileen Hollifield read from *Pride & Prejudice*: their sister's wedding day (to) ...no variation of colour. (Chapman p 315, Chapter 9 of Volume 3, which would likely be Chapter 51 in any paperback edition).

Thanks to Nancy Stokes, editor of the Toronto Region's newsletter, for this gem:

Austenland (in theatres September 13) -- from the book by Shannon Hale, with Keri Russell, JJ Feild, Bret McKenzie, Jennifer Coolidge, James Callis and Jane Seymour -- produced by Stephanie Meyer (*Twilight*) and directed by Jerusha Hess in her directorial debut. Reviews from the premieres have been pretty negative. Anthony Lane, in a recent New Yorker article, wrote, "So lazy is the characterization, so hamstrung the plot, and so chronically broad the overacting that the main interest lies in deciding which to block first, your eyes or your ears."

Our 2013 Meeting Schedule

Oct 19 – Reports from 2013 JASNA AGM (Minneapolis) on *Pride and Prejudice*

Nov 16 – Holman Wang on his Cozy Classics board book, *Pride and Prejudice*, and his upcoming board book, *Emma*

Dec 14 – *Pride and Prejudice* extravaganza including musical and other performances.

Registration is at 10:15 am \$5. meeting fee

St. Phillips Anglican Church- Fireside Room

3737 West 27th Ave, Vancouver

Meetings begin at 10:30am

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