

# Muse & Musings

*"The company of clever, well-informed people, who have a great deal of conversation"*

## December Meeting

### Transition of Regional Coordinator position

We have come to the end of Michelle Siu's term as RC, which she has held since December, 2014. In preparation for this moment, Janice Mallison has been helping as co-RC for the last two years and, after calls for nomination at the last few meetings elicited no more candidates, Janice was duly acclaimed as our new RC. In her opening remarks Janice spoke about the death of her father Tony Elliott, who spoke to us last April (aged 94) about his experiences in the Royal Navy in WWII.

### Women in print, presented by Dr. Kandice Sharren

Dr. Kandice Sharren is project manager of the Women's Print History Project at SFU, a bibliographic relational database of women's contributions to publishing during the "long 18<sup>th</sup> century" from the 1780s to the 1820s. It currently covers in excess of 19,000 titles, all cross-referenced by writers, publishers, editors. The database contextualizes JA's writing to her time and her peers.



*Kandice Sharren*

Sharren spoke about each publisher JA worked with and about her arrangements with them, and also about the other women writers those publishers were publishing at the same time. She conveyed a great deal of interesting information about the publishing industry and print processes, and about different genres of writing that women were engaged in and the different forms of publication. A lively Q&A followed.

*– Elspeth Flood using notes by Lorraine Meltzer*



## Winter / Spring 2022 meeting dates

### At St. Philip's: Mark your calendar!

March 12 <sup>th</sup>	Panel discussion on Jane Austen's comical characters
April 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Jane Austen Day</b> Celebration of JASNA-Vancouver's 40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Betty Shellenberger of SFU on manuscript poetry books created by individuals in Jane's time Michelle Levy, also of SFU, on her recent research on "The Watsons"
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	TBA
June 11 <sup>th</sup>	TBA

Full COVID protocols will be in place, according to Public Health Orders at the time.

Please see the program of events on our website for more up-to-date information (thanks to webmaster Jennifer Cothran):

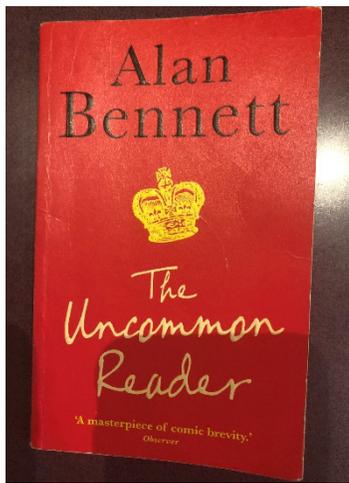
[JASNA-Vancouver program](#)

## Austen Sighting

### *The Uncommon Reader* by Alan Bennett

"The librarian at Windsor had been one of many who had urged on Her Majesty the charms of Jane Austen, but being told on all sides how much ma'am would like her put ma'am off altogether. Besides she had handicaps as a reader of Jane Austen that were peculiarly her own. The essence of Jane Austen lies in minute social distinctions, distinctions that the Queen's unique position made it difficult for her to grasp. There was such a chasm between the monarch and even her grandest subject that the social differences beyond that were somewhat telescoped. So the social distinctions of which Jane Austen made so much seemed of even less consequence to the Queen than they did to the ordinary reader, thus making the novels

much harder going. To begin with at any rate Jane Austen was practically a work of entomology, the characters not quite ants but seeming to the royal reader so much alike as to require a microscope. It was only as she gained in understanding both of literature and of human nature that they took on individuality and charm.”



A clever, charming and witty novel by renowned British author, and playwright Alan Bennett. It tells the story of the Queen as she discovers books and becomes an avid reader, to the consternation of staff, but delight of at least some family members. While very respectful of the Queen and her strong sense of duty, many other characters are less admirable in the execution of their responsibilities.

A delightful book which I highly recommend.

### Library Volunteers Needed for In-Person Meetings

We now are responsible for bringing out and putting back the library in the storage area and therefore could a few (strong) members stay afterwards to help with this.

– Cathleen Boyle, librarian

## Member Profile

### Jennifer Cothran, our new webmaster



Jennifer Cothran has recently taken over as webmaster from Laureen McMahan who has ably held the post since the inception of the website in 2006 in preparation for our AGM in 2007. Here is her member profile:

#### 1. Tell us a bit about who you are and your life to-date.

I'm originally from California, but I've lived in BC for over 15 years now and consider it home. I work as a Marketing Coordinator for an engineering software company. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Music. I'm currently pursuing a career as a voiceover artist. I have a

cat named Momo who brings joy to my life every day. I enjoy reading, of course, and lead a book club of fellow co-workers. I also like to attend the theatre regularly. Favourites include The Arts Club, Bard on the Beach, and Broadway Across Canada.

#### 2. When did you join JASNA? How did you find out about JASNA

I joined JASNA in 2018. After my divorce, I started looking for new hobbies. Since I've always loved Jane Austen, I did a google search of Jane Austen literary societies and came across the JASNA Vancouver site. My first event was the summer talk with Emma Clery, author of *The Banker's Sister*. We went to tea afterwards and had a lovely time. After that event, I signed up – and the rest, they say, is history!

#### 3. How did you first get started with Jane Austen?

In my early 20s, I used to house-sit for a Jane Austen enthusiast. She'd have me over for tea and homemade scones, and introduced me to the 1995 BBC production of *Pride & Prejudice*. My love affair with Jane Austen and England started then. I have visited the UK five times over the past 25 years. I've probably seen *P&P* at least 40 times. There's no better Mr. Darcy than Colin Firth! A close second in film adaptations that I enjoy is Emma Thompson's version of *Sense & Sensibility*. I had read only two JA novels prior to joining JASNA, but have since read the six major works. My favourite is *Persuasion*.

#### 4. What do you like about JASNA?

I enjoy learning more about Jane Austen's life and times. It enhances my understanding and appreciation of her works. It's nice to get together with others who share a similar interest in literature.

#### 5. Has JASNA given you any special memories? New friends? Inspiration to new experiences?

Notable special memories include: Performing music with Julia and the dramatic reading with Michelle, the special catered events, and playing whist!

## Call for Volunteers

### 2022 JASNA Vancouver's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Projects

Joan Reynolds would like to begin work on a "legacy project" in celebration of our 40-year anniversary, and she is looking for three or four people to volunteer to help. The group would work together independently and go through Eileen's early newsletters one by one, creating an index of the articles in each issue. There is no specific deadline, just something that can be built over time and used as a reference resource. If this is something you feel

you would like to help with, please contact Joan Reynolds at [joanar@shaw.ca](mailto:joanar@shaw.ca)



It is proposed to do a special 40<sup>th</sup>-anniversary feature or supplement in our June newsletter. Members are asked to submit short articles, or even a couple of sentences, relating any special memories you have of meetings over the years. Of particular interest are those “pioneer” members who went to the very early meetings at Eileen and Ron’s house, but any special memories or anecdotes will be of interest. Especially welcome are any photos of earlier meetings and events. There have been a lot of activities over the years in our Region, including two AGMs (1986 and 2007) and many memorable Jane Austen Days. You can submit your contributions to either the editor Elspeth Flood, or to Joan Reynolds.

## Newest Vancouver Library Board Member

Phyllis and Lindsay’s son

Tim Bottomer, son of active JASNA members, Lindsay and Phyllis, was appointed to the Board of the Vancouver Public Library on January 1<sup>st</sup>. With 22 locations it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest public library system in Canada.

A long-time avid reader and library patron, Tim vividly remembers the thrilling moment in his boyhood when his mother showed him how to access inter-library loans! This enabled him to finish reading all of Ronald Welch’s Carey family series of historical fiction for children.

Now a busy senior solicitor and counsel with BC Hydro, he takes his two children to the library every weekend with his four-year-old getting an even earlier exposure to inter-library loans as they attempt to track down all of Bill Peet’s storybooks.

Although Tim has not yet been convinced by his mother to read any of Austen’s novels, he has attended several

JASNA meetings even appearing as one of the soldiers in the trenches in our 2014 dramatic reading of Kipling’s “The Janeites” see arrow below.



The photo above shows Tim wearing one of his ever-growing collection of T-shirts and sweatshirts that support libraries and independent bookstores.

Hurrah for Readers!

– Phyllis Ferguson

## RC’s Corner

Janice Mallison



Hello to the membership from your new Regional Coordinator. I have been serving as co-RC with Michelle Siu for the past two years. Thank you to the membership for your faith in and support in me as I take on the full role of Regional Coordinator. I am looking forward to working with our Programming Committee and the JASNA leadership to fulfill the RC duties. I want to thank Michelle for her introduction to the role of RC and acknowledge her excellent meeting leadership. Michelle has spent many hours overseeing the details that made our meetings so successful. I am particularly grateful also for her consistent technical expertise, ensuring meeting presentations were visually impressive. And then more recently for her success with the Zoom meetings over 2020 and 2021. Thanks to Michelle’s leadership, even with a pandemic, our group was able to reliably meet and bring some fun and normalcy during a tough time.

Michelle – you have been a great RC, rising to the occasion in a challenging moment for the Society, and enlarging and improving on the RC role. I hope to continue your work to ensure that we to prosper and advance JASNA Vancouver’s legacy.

**Call for volunteer Treasurer**

Our treasurer Elaine Wong has held the position for more than six years. The position of Treasurer is volunteer and not voted on, therefore it has no term limits. But during the coming year we will look for a successor.

**Call for Victoria AGM volunteers**



We’re less than **eight months** out from the AGM in Victoria. Volunteers are needed in many areas, including but not limited to: introducing breakout speakers, attending tours as a local representative, proofreading, helping at registration desk, filling a seat in the Emporium, technology expertise, and many others. To volunteer, please email Alison Dacia Brown, Coordinator of the JASNA 2022 AGM [jasnavictoria2022agm@gmail.com](mailto:jasnavictoria2022agm@gmail.com) detailing your volunteer capability, time commitment, and home phone or cell phone contact info.

If you have ideas for a future meeting, have a topic or speaker you would like to see at our meeting, please email me or approach me or any member of the Program Committee.  
 – Janice Mallison



**JASNA Vancouver Contacts**

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Co-RC	<b>vacant – looking for a volunteer</b>
Treasurer:	Elaine Wong <a href="mailto:treasurer.jasnavancouver@gmail.com">treasurer.jasnavancouver@gmail.com</a> <b>looking for a volunteer</b> to take over
Program Committee chair:	<b>vacant – looking for a volunteer</b>
Newsletter Editor:	Elspeth Flood
Website coordinator:	Jennifer Cothran
Facebook Administrator:	Joan Reynolds
Library:	Cathleen Boyle & Jennifer Cothran
Austen Extracts:	Aileen Hollifield
Bountiful Basket:	Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer
Outreach Coordinator:	Donna Ornstein

To contact any of these volunteers, email our Regional Co-ordinator at [jasnavancouverrc@gmail.com](mailto:jasnavancouverrc@gmail.com).

**This Newsletter**, the publication of the Vancouver Region of the Jane Austen Society of North America, is distributed to members by email and posted on our website. Members who so request may receive a hard copy either at a meeting or in the mail. All submissions and book reviews on the subject of Jane Austen, her life, her works and her times, are welcome.

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