

# Jane Austen Society of North America

JASNA Vancouver

NEWSLETTER NO. 56

NOVEMBER 1996

DING DONG BELL: Eileen Sutherland.

You could rap with your knuckles, pound with a fist, or even kick the door with a good sturdy boot, to announce your arrival.

It was considered a great technological advance during the Middle Ages when hinged metal bars for door knockers were devised. They ranged from common iron bars, to intricate wrought iron designs, and all were strong, dependable and

easy to use. But they did make a loud objectionable noise, and we can imagine Mrs. Bennet's complaints about the lack of any consideration for her nerves.

The introduction of a gentle bell must have been welcome indeed. Early doorbells were not made from the cast bronze alloy used for making church bells — they were made from a bronze-plated metal which resulted in a high tinkling sound. The ringing was activated by pulling down an easy-to-see lever just outside the door, or turning a knob which made the bell inside ring. When electricity came into common use, early models were wired to a small storage battery — \$2 from Sears for bell, push button, battery and wires at the beginning of the 20th century.

Whenever you ring a doorbell, you may think of Jane Austen. According to the OED she was the first to use the word "door-bell" in print, about 1815: in Persuasion (p.133), "Lady Russell could not hear the door-bell without feeling it might be [Captain Benwick]". The OED does not seem to be aware (at least in my edition of 1971) that JA had already used the word in an earlier novel. In P&P (p.170) the arrival of Mr. Darcy and Colonel Fitzwilliam at Hunsford Parsonage "was announced by the doorbell." Later, Mr. Darcy came again, alone: "[Elizabeth] was startled by a ring at the

door, the certain signal of a visitor" (p.117). In <u>Sanditon</u>, also, Mr. Parker's new thouse has a doorbell: "[Charlotte] was on the steps & had rung, but the door was not opened." (p.406).

This gives a strong clue to the time of the invention of a doorbell — some time between 1750 to 1770 or even earlier. (We should allow some years for the invention to become popular enough for Jane Austen, in a remote country parsonage, to know of it, and assume it was common enough for her readers to know about it. I wouldn't expect either Lady Russell or Mr. Collins to have the very latest invention installed immediately). Inside bells which rang in the servants' quarters when bell—pulls were pulled by the upstairs folk, were common in country houses of the 18th century, but a doorbell rung from outside must have been later.

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I have good reason to be content, for thank God I can read. John Keats (1795-1821)

#### THE DASHWOOD INHERITANCE - Kathleen Glancy (Edinburgh)

Emma Thompson, when adapting the story of <u>S&S</u> for film, condensed a fairly complicated financial situation into one line suggesting that the Dashwood girls could not inherit Norland because of their sex. She over-simplified - and she was right not to go into an explanation which would have involved people telling each other things they both knew already - and I'm not so sure she was entirely wrong.

Let us suppose old Mr. Dashwood had not put restrictions on his bequest of the estate, but left it unconditionally to his nephew Henry. Would this have meant Henry Dashwood would have left nothing at all to his son John? John's wife Fanny thinks so, but might she not be judging him by what <u>she</u> would have done? Remember, this was the <u>family</u> estate, "long settled" - and the only way that Henry Dashwood could have benefited his wife and daughters at the expense of his son would have been to sell the estate, perhaps giving John the first refusal, and divide the proceeds four ways to give his penniless second wife a jointure and his daughters handsome dowries.

Mrs. Dashwood is not capable of managing an estate, and if it was left to any or equally among all of the girls it would condemn them to remain unmarried or see the estate become the property of a husband or husbands when they did marry. To thrive, an estate had to remain in the keeping of one person and not be split among a large family.

It is true John had his mother's money. I digress for a moment here — one of my young second cousins asked me to explain what the first chapter of <u>S&S</u>, her school reader, meant when it said the first Mrs. Dashwood's fortune, which was large, had half devolved to her son on his coming—of—age, and the rest reverted to him on his father's death. When I did, she said that the first Mrs. Dashwood's father — I assumed he had arranged the terms of her marriage contract — must have been as mean as John. I can't agree.

Here was a man allowing his very well dowered daughter to marry a man who had a mere  $\mathfrak{L}7,000$  to his name. No doubt he allowed it because of Henry's expectations of inheriting Norland. (One can't but wonder whether Henry loved the first Mrs. Dashwood or just found her convenient). A man arranging the terms of his daughter's settlement had an easy time if it was assumed her husband would die first — the money was then hers to provide an income for her widowhood and she would decide on its disposal on her death. But the possibility that she might die first had to be faced — vast numbers of young women died in childbirth. It really cannot be considered mean for a man in considering this possibility to decide that the money he was providing should 80 to his grandchild and not any offspring his son—in—law might produce on a second venture.

It was in fact very <u>generous</u> to allow Henry Dashwood a life interest in half the dowry, thus eventually helping him to marry a woman with no money for love, instead of leaving it all to John (and any full siblings he might have had, presumably) on coming of age.

John had his mother's money, and his wife's. Does that mean he should have nothing from his father? Would that have been fair? In my view, John would still have inherited Norland. There is no reason to believe his father doesn't love him, too.

How then would Mr. Dashwood have provided for his wife and other children? If he had lived long enough he would have saved up enough money to do it even with the estate encumbered by the terms of his uncle's will. Therefore, if it had not been encumbered he could have done that and other things without disinheriting John. He could have sold some parts of the land, (Perhaps Hartfield was built on land sold to dower a Knightley daughter). He could have made his wife and daughters a charge on the estate by leaving them incomes for life from it. Most tellingly, it is mentioned specifically in Chapter 1 that "any sale of its valuable woods" was forbidden. So when Marianne rhapsodises over the trees at Norland we should consider the very good chance that if her sire had only been able they'd have been chopped down for her dowry.

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# MURRAY WANAMAKER:

The recent annual meeting of JASNA in Richmond VA was both exciting and informative. Some 550 people concentrated on "Jane Austen and Her Men". First-time delegates were identifiable by special name tags and were given a warm welcome. In addition, each registrant had been asked to choose a favourite male character, and his name was printed below that of the member.

Highlights of the meetings were the plenary sessions, a kind of Regency Fair, and the banquet. There were many period costumes, especially at the fair, where there were demonstrations of tussy-mussy making, quilting, silhouettes, spinning, weaving, and lace making. At the same time, a group of students from a private school in Illinois circulated in appropriate dress. They belong to a JA club as a school activity and had practised British speech for hawking chocolates and trinkets. (One of these young women suddenly emitted a piercing shriek, fluttered her hands wildly, and sank to the floor, to the consternation of some adult bystanders who thought it was a real fit. Someone asked for smelling salts!)

The banquet featured fine food, a play within a play, and entertainment by the University of North Carolina Men's Glee Club. The play was <u>Jane Austen's "Sir Charles Grandison"</u> with additional material by Michael Joyce and William Kemp called <u>A Family Performance of Jane Austen's Play</u>, the whole presented as possible amateur theatricals by the Austen family. Each person present received a copy of the text.

As is often the case with conferences, difficult choices had to be made among simultaneous "break-out" sessions. I went to "Divided Between Distress and Diversion: Mr. Collins' 'Declaration in Form' and Mr. Woodhouse's Exclamation 'Ah! " presented by Kazuko Hisamori, Professor of English at Ferris University, Yokohama. She explored the complicated female-male dynamics related to Austen's ridicule of Mr. Collins, particularly as compared to her treatment of Mr. Woodhouse as a sacred fool-king.

My other choice was to hear Charlotte Samelstein on "Some Relationships and Resemblances in the Six Major Novels." Ms. Samelstein (who for 25 years has read JA every night before sleeping) gave a short talk categorizing Austenian men by the topics of "marriage", "fathers and brothers", and "lovers", followed by an interesting open discussion. Someone pointed out that we should not judge Mr. Collins' toadying too harshly since his "living" depended on keeping Lady Catherine content with him. Another person stated that Mrs. Bennet does not seem unhappy with Mr. B., as husband and father, and that the latter would be a different person if he had had a son.

Richmond is a fascinating city where visitors receive a cordial Southern welcome on the street and in shops. The area, including Colonial Williamsburg, has a history dating from earliest English settlements in the U.S. It is also redolent of the heroism and horror of the Civil war. Some of us, before and after the conference, toured museums and the State Capitol, also viewing architectural grandeur of former years, and monuments (such as those of George Washington, an early Virginian, and Civil War heroes Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, J.E.B.Stuart, etc.) A special treat, part of the conference program, was a half-day at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, including breakfast and a conducted tour of the magnificent Fabergé special exhibit - glorious examples of artifacts made for Russian czars and nobility and now collectors' items in various countries.

Frances and I, along with other delegates, took a final day-long tour focused on the sites and activities of Thomas Jefferson, including a stop at the University of Virginia, which he founded and where he designed buildings; then on to his elaborate home and estate, Monticello, also built from his sketches, for a special viewing of the interior of the house.

#### CONFERENCE, continued:

Richmond, then ranks high as a tourist attraction. We would like to return there with more time to explore. By the way, missionary work still needs to be done on behalf of JASNA. When we alighted from the bus on the U. of V. campus, a passerby asked one of our members if we were a special group. Upon hearing the name Jane Austen, he said: "Then you must all be nurses." (Could he have been thinking of Jane Addams? But was she a nurse?).

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#### FRANCES\_WANAMAKER:

"Emma would have been amused by its variations". So it was at the session presented by Victoria Carson, a vivacious teacher from the Creative Children's Academy, Palatine, IL. Her topic, "A Transdisciplinary Approach to Teaching Jane Austen" was demonstrated with her students. Dialects, vocal techniques, formal vs informal speech, presentation, as oral interpretations were demonstrated in characteristic dialogues.

The approach to Art is explored through painting and drawing, needlework, furniture and decor, costume design and construction - all covered during the term. Social Studies consists of Cultural Analysis, Geography, Customs, Manners, History, Tea and Dinner rituals, all researched and expressed and experienced. Language Arts includes Reading, Writing, Comparative Literature, Critical thinking, Textual Analysis; Multimedia Adaptations are practised with excitement. Music includes the Research of Period Music, the Research and Performance of Period Dance. The Research and Performance of Solo and Ensemble Instruments is underway. A copy of Victoria Carson's handout with her description and purpose has been placed in the library.

It was a delight to have the young students reply to the question, "Why did you join the Jane Austen Club?" and "Why do you want to take the course?" One young fellow replied, "My Mother persuaded me to take the program." Other students liked the varied opportunities that the course offered, such as travel to the Art Institute to view the Regency artifacts.

Could it be that JASNA, "Jolly Austen Students New Artists" will develop a future excitement fit for future Theatre, Film and Interactive ideas and ideals of Sense and Sensibility?

A travel in time was experienced in Susan Morgan's delivery of "Captain Wentworth, British Imperialism and Personal Romance."

The descriptions of the Royal Navy's explorations to the New World of America and the Caribbean were wrought with strife and hardship, intrigue and controversy over slavery on the plantations. Reports of Slave Uprisings on Antigua and Santa Domingo Islands were enlightened with discussion. The subject of the abolition of slavery being brought to the British Parliament in 1804, and its postponement in England and the Islands of the Caribbean till later in the century, was given various viewpoints. England and other European countries were engaged in the conflict with China and the opium trade. These many failures were compared to Wentworth's failure in romance.

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## **RON SUTHERLAND:**

"The Lady and the Sword: JA's Portrayal of the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines", Donald Bittner, Professor of History, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Virginia.

[Bittner pointed out that for those interested in history, he has found the Patrick O'Brien novels very accurate on military matters].

Jane Austen knew the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines; having two brothers in the Royal Navy who corresponded with her regularly, she had an intimate insight into the Navy. In her writings she limited herself to those areas she understood — she didn't get involved with strategy, for example.

## CONFERENCE, continued:

In <u>Persuasion</u>, JA givesthe values of the times concerning the Royal Navy - for us, values of historic importance. At the time, these values were recognized as a reflection of the prevailing opinion. She has characters in <u>Persuasion</u> showing a lack of knowledge about the Navy - for example, Sir Walter Elliot, who is highly critical of the Navy which gave men of lower birth a chance to rise to a high station and wealth. When he met Admiral Croft, he calls him the best looking naval man he had ever seen, and he was proud of renting his home to an Admiral, not a mere Mister.

Captain Wentworth was worth £20-25,000 through the capture of ships and cargoes, and now he was no longer a nobody. [Jim Heldman: this amount in today's terms represents over a million dollars]. The three naval captains throughout the novel are informing the reader about the Navy.

 $\frac{\text{Mansfield Park gives a less attractive view of the Royal Navy through the views} \\ \text{expressed by the Crawfords.} \\ \text{It shows the lack of status of midshipmen (like William Price)} \\ \text{as seen by young women at assemblies.} \\$ 

The need of a sponsor, and the concern of stagnation at a particular rank - always remaining a career lieutenant - were major concerns of those in the services. The Royal Marines were mostly from a lower level of society than the Royal Navy. Lieutenant Price, Fanny's father, is a very accurate portrayal of the ecnomic hardship of a lieutenant in the Royal Marines.

"Hollywood Make-overs" - Deborah Kaplan [a last-minute change of topic]

Kaplan focused on the recent films <u>Sense and Sensibility</u> and <u>Emma</u>. She considers that Jane Austen set the standard for romantic novels with heroes generally 5-10 years older than the heroines, and usually the story starting with a clash between the hero and the heroine. Kaplan considers that Hollywood has "Harlequinized" the stories by focusing on the romance and not the other characters. She also suggested they were "Harlequinized" by the choice of actors always good-looking and sexy - the medium of film is not the culprit. She liked both the films and pointed out that the films were made for modern audiences, and praised film for being able to supply visual detail.

 $\underline{\text{S\&S}}$  has grossed \$43 million in North America, \$125 million worldwide, with big audiences in Australia, Japan and Europe.  $\underline{\text{Emma}}$  has grossed \$20 million in North America.

Kaplan thought both Brandon and Ferrars are too good looking when only Willoughby should be good looking. Previous roles by the actors who portrayed Brandon and Ferrars took away from their roles in  $\underline{S\&S}$ , in her view.

In Emma, Kaplan's main criticism was that the age separation between Emma and Knightley was not enough. The other characters in both films are too thin, and women's lives lack the detail of the books. She pointed out that feminist critics have praised the dominance of women, and value the support of women characters for each other.

She believes as a result of the films there will be many new readers of JA's novels, but when they find they are not "harlequinized" some may be disappointed, but a few will be won over.

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#### JOAN MANN:

The conference attendee's choice of a favourite man seemed to be Mr. Darcy. To quote Irene Dias, Ohio North Coast Region:

Our elegant, handsome, though vain Mr. Darcy, prompts this refrain:
 Imbued with much pride
 Yet down deep inside
The cream of the crop, I maintain.

#### CONFERENCE, continued:

There were many highlights and a couple of low lights. For the Vancouver Region, if the editor refrains from using the blue pencil, the highest light came when Eileen Sutherland received almost a standing ovation for her introduction of Carol Shields and her daughter, Anne Giardini.

The university of Manitoba Pulitzer Prize winner (for "The Stone Diaries") and her practising, Vancouver lawyer daughter offered an outstanding presentation — an innovative, conversational dialogue format using references to John Gray's "Men are From Mars, Women are From Venus" to demonstrate the superiority of the assessment and understanding of the characteristics of men (in particular) and women as depicted by Jane Austen, as compared with Mr. Gray's depictions. — Watch for the complete text in Persuasions.

Brian Southam, the President of the Jane Austen Society, gave a fascinating account of his search and research surrounding Jane Austen's family play, "Sir Charles Grandison". He had come across a reference to Richardson's novel some forty years ago. The play itself came up for auction in 1977. He noted that Samuel Richardson first gave voice to women in his novel. Through his hero, Sir Charles Grandison, he gave voice to the female cause by portraying women as psychologically interesting. Jane Austen was familiar with his work and was certainly influenced by his thought. The differences lie in Richardson's portrayal of a masculine hero/mentor whilst Jane Austen depicts both male and female mentors — people who learn from each other. It is only the female characters in Richardson who grow and learn from his "good men". And a good man is shown to be a man of virtue, honour and religion — the epitome of perfection. In Jane Austen's view, perhaps a faultless monster has been created. [The play is in our library].

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We found Richmond a delight - the leaves were just starting to colour up. The James River was meandering calmly below the windows - it can de-calm fairly regularly behind the old flood walls, just one hundred miles from the Atlantic.

The old plantation houses and their hosts charmed and enlightened, especially Northern and foreign visitors, as we saw evidence of and heard tales of the chaotic days during the revolutionary war and the war between the states.

Thomas Jefferson's estate, Monticello, is full of Jefferson's architectural idio-syncrasies (e.g. he thought of stairs simply as a means of providing access between floors, and as such they should be tiny and unobtrusive). The grounds are vast, the views unobstructed; and the former slave and small factory quarters are in the process of fairly recent excavation and re-construction, which will unearth social and cultural history covering an era that has, to date, been under-studied.

Jefferson was both the founder and the architect of the University of Virginia. As an educator, he advocated a close association of the faculty members and the student body, both physically and intellectually. He achieved his goal on this campus. Today's student population is about 52% female, which did not surprise us as much as hearing that it was only in 1970 that women were granted admission!

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#### **EILEEN SUTHERLAND:**

Robert Benson spoke on "Art and Artlessness: A dialogue between Jane Austen and Sir Humphry Repton on the Subjects of Landscape Gardening, Novel Writing and the Improvement of 'An Awkward Taste'." This last expression comes in  $\underline{P\&P}$  - at Pemberley, Elizabeth "had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste."

Repton and JA lived at much the same time, but there is no suggestion that they ever were acquainted. For the sake of his talk, Benson assumes that JA and Repton had a long correspondence over the years — just recently discovered — on this subject. He read two of the fictional letters, one at the beginning when JA asks Repton to give her some advice on the correct language she should use in her novels where she wants her characters to speak about "improving an estate." Benson composes the letters very cleverly, using a

lot of JA's own words, such as Edward Ferrars' "I shall call hills steep, which ought to be bold", and so on. And he illustrated his talk with well-chosen slides of engravings, plans, paintings, contemporary illustrations and modern photographs of country estates, picturesque scenery and the suggested improvements shown in Repton's Red Books.

Benson finds an interest in landscape improvements an important facet in JA's novels: Catherine's lesson on viewing the landscape from Henry Tilney in  $\underline{NA}$ , Edward's remarks on the picturesque in  $\underline{S\&S}$ , Elizabeth's delight in the grounds of  $\underline{Pemberley}$  in  $\underline{P\&P}$ , and the discussion of "improving" Sotherton and Thornton Lacey in  $\underline{MP}$ . In the early works, Benson found an "unformed taste", but feelings of simplicity and artlessness, spontaneous and natural. In Emma and Persuasion, the natural setting creates the mood of the novel.

Both Repton and JA show an elegance of taste with an economy of means. They reconcile the extremes of language and taste. They share a natural affinity for harmony of composition and internal consistency, and an innate balance of conscious art and apparent ease. In the novels an actual consciousness of landscape is rarely spelled out, but knowledge of landscape improvements is expected of the characters. JA herself knew enough to satirize landscape gardening and cottages ornées. Her description of Pemberley includes all that is best in the theory of the picturesque. Of Sotherton she gives an atypically volumnious description, and the opinions of various characters: Mary Crawford, for instance, wants as much beauty as she can get for her money; Fanny and Edmund show their good taste and sincere love of natural beauty. JA is suspicious of change, favours the status quo.

In <u>Emma</u>, the view of Abbey Mill Farm is almost the only description of landscape, and it is equated to pride of place and identity. <u>Persuasion</u> has less prospect or distant view, more shade.

At the end, Benson read another fictional letter, this time from Repton to JA, asking for help in his prospective novel about a hero among 3 or 4 families in a small country village.

#### DUES REMINDER

After all that romancers may say, there is no doing without money. (NA)

JASNA's membership year dates from Jane Austen's birthday, December 16. Your annual membership dues of \$32.00 should be paid by that date. Mail cheques (to JASNA Canada) to: Nancy Thurston, 200 Kingsmount Blvd., Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 1K9.

At the September meeting, it was agreed that the local dues will be \$15.00. Make cheque out to JASNA Vancouver, and mail to Eileen Sutherland.

For your convenience, both cheques may be handed in at the December meeting only, and then will be forwarded to the appropriate treasurers. (The dues must be paid in two separate cheques). N.B. You must be a member of JASNA to be a member of the local group.

For your dues, you receive the annual journal <u>Persuasions</u>, and <u>JASNA News</u> which is being expanded into almost a magazine format, rather than a thin paper. Look for more contact in various forms with the parent JASNA in the future.

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Lady Salishury became Master of the Hatfield Hounds in 1793, a post which she held for several years and only resigned because, at seventy-eight, she began to find the pace a little too hot for her. (p.134)

English Home Life 1500-1800: Christina Hole.

#### LIBRARY CORNER - Dianne Kerr.

Help! Another errant book! JANE AUSTEN by Brian Wilks. One of our members borrowed this, and then forgot and left it at the meeting of December, 1995. Large book with beautifully coloured dust jacket. Probably one of you inadvertently took it away. Please: look among your books, look on your coffee table.

(And please look again for Lovers' Vows - one of you has it).

#### Additions:

Clothing Patterns: #1 - George The Third 1815. #2 George The Third 1805.

Jane Austen's Letters, ed. D.LeFaye 1995 (3rd ed.)

Austen, Caroline: My Aunt Jane Austen. A Memoir.

Bowden, Jean (Curator): Jane Austen House Guidebook (10an).

Postcard - from actress Emma Thompson to Joan Austen-Leigh (photocopy)
No charge for borrowing; please sign card.

#### Video Cassettes:

Persuasion. BBC 1971 225 minutes.

Emma. BBC 1973. 257 minutes.

Pride & Prejudice. BBC mini-series 1995. approx. 6 hours.

#### Audio Cassettes:

Eileen Sutherland and Christine Liotta: CKNW interview, January 5, 1996 approx. 45 minutes.

Lank, Edith: Session from the 17th Annual JASNA Conference in Madison, Wisconsin on Mansfield Park.

Bander, Elaine: As above, different session. Both 1995.

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# MEMBERSHIP - JASNA Canada: (As of May 1, 1996):

Alberta	38	7	2	Nova Scotia	11	3	0
British Columbia	90	3	9	Ontario	167	14	17
Manitoba	11	1	1	Prince Edward Is.	0	0	0
New Brunswick	8	1	2	Quebec	28	4	7
Newfoundland	3	0	0	Saskatchewan	5	0	0
North West Terr.	1.0	0	0	Yukon Territory	0	0	0
Total Canada:	362	33	38				
	#	0	*		#	0	*

<sup># -</sup> Total Membership

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...novel-writing - not, as commonly understood, a mere tissue of chit-chat, lovers' quarrels, and parents' cruelty, all ending in a splendid wedding and a great fortune - but a tale of interest and intellect, leading to important lessons of life, because built on the realities of life, and embellished only where embellishment is necessary to catch the attention and gratify taste.

[Review of The Wrongs of Woman: or, Maria, by Mary Wollstonecraft (Critical Review, 1798)].

<sup>° -</sup> Number of non-renewed members

<sup>\* -</sup> New members in 1996

#### RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE JASNA (Canada) LENDING LIBRARY

Contact: Celine Kear, 615 Churchill Drive, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3L 1W4 Tel. 204-475-3200.

Materials sent out free; borrower pays return postage; returned within 1 month.

BOOKS:

Horwitz, Barbara. Jane Austen, the Question of Women's Education.

Lascelles, Mary. Jane Austen and Her Art.

Southam, Brian. Jane Austen, the Cultural Heritage 1870-1940.

Watkins, Susan. Jane Austen's Town & Country Style.

Wilks, Brian. Jane Austen. (Donated by Margaret McLean, Toronto).

VIDEOS:

Mansfield Park. BBC Video.

Persuasion. (1995) Starring Amanda Root and Ciaran Hinds.

Sense & Sensibility. Starring Hugh Grant and Emma Thompson.

AUDIOS:

Emma. Unabridged, read by Prunella Scales. 10 cassettes,  $14\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

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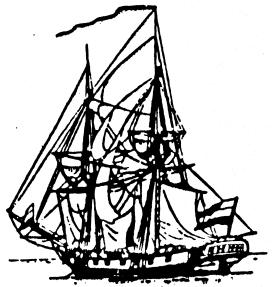
#### GEORGE VANCOUVER, MUSICIAN

When we think of Captain Vancouver, we think of an intrepid explorer who made several voyages around the world, a caring leader who prevented scurvy among his men, and a man with an intelligent and inquiring mind. We do not think of him in connection with music.

On Vancouver's long voyage (1792-4) to survey the Pacific Coast of North America, he took with him aboard his ship what he called his "music box". This was not the typical little tinkling mechanical toy so fashionable in the early 19th century; it was the 18th century instrument which we now usually call a barrel organ, in which the keyboard and pipes are put into play by a cylinder which is turned by means of a handle.

On the voyage, Vancouver called in at the San Carlos Mission in California. He found morale low, and in an attempt to enliven the community he asked if he might play his music box for them. The subsequent pleasure was so unmistakeable that Captain Vancouver gave the instrument to the Mission when he set sail again. I wonder if it is still there?

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It is with his tears that man washes the afflictions of man, and...it is with his laughter that sometimes he soothes and charms his heart.

On the Essence of Laughter: Charles Baudelaire.

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# WHY JANE AUSTEN AND WHY NOW? - Six Reasons for Her Present Popularity - Dorothy McGavran.

- (1) The return of the importance of the family. In JA's novels the parents are bad or absent, but they end with a new family and hope for the future.
- (2) The importance today of finding the right person to marry because of AIDS and the skyrocketing divorce rate.
- (3) We long for civility, manners and role models.
- (4) We are nervous of the emergence of a class system. Our material security is slipping, and we fear our children will not be able to afford our lifestyle. JA describes a similar society in transition.
- (5) We long for life to turn out well for those who deserve it, but do not want the stupid to be punished too harshly. Many of JA's characters are proud, haughty and undeserving, but she allows them to continue on.
- (6) We long for a life of the mind. We want to lift ourselves up. "The reward for reading JA is being able to re-read her. Life for intelligent people is rewarding if there is someone with whom to enjoy it. In addition, we are in on the joke: we are the best characters."

This last is the biggest reason for Jane Austen's popularity today. Intelligent people enjoy irony (defined as the simultaneous recognition of all points of view).. Jane Austen celebrates people who can survive fragmentation, people with a life of the mind.

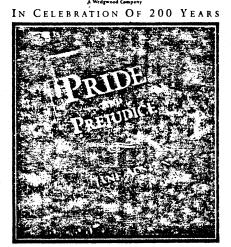
- Excerpted from the North Carolina Newsletter, Summer, 1996.

#### PRIDE, PREJUDICE, AND POTTERY

[From an advertisement in Country Life Magazine, June 27, 1996]

# Mason's Ironstone

VISIT THE Wedgwood VISITORS' CENTRE, BARLASTON, STAFFORDSHIRE, THIS SUMMER AND YOU WILL FIND A SPECTACULAR EXHIBITION FEATURING OVER 600 OUTSTANDING EXAMPLES OF SUPERBLY decorated MASON'S PRODUCTS, DATING FROM THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY ONWARDS. YOU WILL ALSO FIND A FASCINATING SELECTION OF THE COSTUMES SPECIALLY CREATED FOR THE RECENT BBC TV ADAPTATION OF PRIDE AND PREJUDICE. THE CONNECTION? MASON'S WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1796 ~ HENCE THIS YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS ~ AND IN THAT SAME YEAR JANE AUSTEN Wrote PRIDE AND PREJUDICE.



HOWEVER HER NOVEL WAS NOT published UNTIL 1813 — THE VERY YEAR IN WHICH CHARLES JAMES MASON TOOK OUT THE PATENT ON WHAT WAS TO BECOME FAMOUS AS IRONSTONE CHINA. IF YOU APPRECIATE exquisite CRAFTSMANSHIP, WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU TO ONE OF THE LARGEST, MOST impressive exhibitions OF ITS TYPE EVER HELD.

FOR WURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: THE CUSTOMER CARE DEPARTMENT, MASON'S IRONSTONE, BARLASTON, STORE-CH-TRENT 5112 9ES, ENGLAND, TELEPHONE: (01782) 282731. FAX: (01782) 204402.

A room without books is like a body without a soul. - Cicero.

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