

Jane Austen Society of North America

VANCOUVER REGION

NEWSLETTER NO.68

NOVEMBER 1999

NEW PRESIDENT

Eileen Sutherland announces with pleasure that Keiko Parker is the new President of JASNA Vancouver, as of September 1999.

LOOKING BACK - Eileen Sutherland.

JASNA was organized late in 1979, but most of the action was in the East. In May, 1981, Joan Austen-Leigh decided that there should be a Jane Austen Society in Vancouver. She borrowed her daughter's apartment and hosted a supper party. Eight of us were there. Keiko and I were already members of JASNA and on the mailing list; the others Joan knew as writers living in Vancouver who might be interested in Jane Austen's work.

We had a very pleasant time talking about the novels. At the end of the evening, Joan more or less said: "Now I've got you together to form a Jane Austen Society - the rest is up to you." We left, expressing our hopes of getting together again soon. Then we all sat back and waited for someone else to do something.

Eventually I realized that I wanted a Jane Austen Society in Vancouver, and if nobody else was going to arrange it, then I would have to do it myself. In October 1981, Ron and I went to the annual conference, held that year in San Francisco. I saw no-one else from Vancouver, but Joan Austen-Leigh gave a fascinating talk about the Austen family. The pleasure of meeting other people interested in Jane Austen, and eager to talk about her, made me determined to have a Jane Austen group in Vancouver.

I wrote to Joan for the list of names she had invited, and made out invitations for a Jane Austen Birthday party in December. In the end, only two could come, and I cancelled the party. The next March, I tried again, with a supper party at my home - nine of us altogether, including Joan, her husband Dennis Mason-Hurley and her daughter Freydis Welland. Others were Keiko Parker, Mary Coleman, Kathleen Carter and Flora Farnden - some of you will remember these members. It was another pleasant evening, and we thought of ideas for getting a group meeting again in the Fall.

Those first years we were not thinking of regular monthly meetings, but rather of special events, such as our first annual dinner, at Brock House Restaurant in November 1982 - twelve of us there, non-stop conversation, and an informal talk by Joan Austen-Leigh; and a lunch the next May at the Beach House Restaurant in Stanley Park. It is obvious how much encouragement and help we got from Joan Austn-Leigh, always willing to do anything she could.

In the next few years, we got more ambitious, and reserved a private room (free of charge) for two lectures at the Vancouver Public Library: on October 1, 1983, a member of the library staff talked about Jane Austen and her contemporaries, and on October 29, Dr. Mabel Colbeck of UBC spoke on "Jane Austen's Novels: A Survey." The following March and April, we met at the Mount Pleasant Branch library, to hear talks on Jane Austen's last illness and the state of medical knowledge at the time, by Dr. John Norris, and the importance of "property" in Jane Austen's life and in the novels, by Dr. James Winter, both from UBC. These were followed by a Sunday Brunch in June 1984 at Brock House, with readings and discussion and conversation. The Vancouver group was well established by this time, thanks in large part to the generosity of local scholars who willingly donated their time and effort to give us learned and interesting talks.

In 1983, our young group accepted another challenge, also from Joan Austen-Leigh. There had been a conference in San Francisco, but all the others had been in the East, and she thought it was time to have it on this coast again: there was no active group in Victoria - would the Vancouver group arrange a conference here in 1986? Expo would be here that year, and probably would draw a crowd. We considered it with great trepidation, but finally agreed.

The chosen theme was *The Watsons*, Jane Austen's early and delightful uncompleted work. From then on, our thoughts and meetings focused on this novel, and the conference to come. We held a lunch and discussion at Brock House in November 1984: Why did Jane Austen keep a copy of the fragment but never finish it? What are the characters like? What subjects or characters would make good topics for lectures/debates/discussion groups/work shops? There was lots to talk about!

The Hotel Georgia was chosen as the site - appropriate name, suitable size, and an open weekend when we wanted it. Joan's daughter Freydis, who had had experience arranging meetings for various organizations, took over all negotiations with the hotel. Joan had written a "biography" of Jane Austen, "Our Own Particular Jane," using only the actual words of the novels and letters. She knew professional actors in Victoria who agreed to come and take the four parts of the cast for a performance after the Saturday banquet. Speakers were chosen from those we had enjoyed at earlier meetings and others whose reputations we knew of.

Dr. Juliet McMaster agreed to give the opening address on Saturday morning, "God Gave Us Our Relations," and Dr. Joseph Wiesenfarth would speak Saturday afternoon on "*The Watsons* as Pretext - what elements from the fragment were used in later novels?" We decided on a choice of five small-group sessions Saturday morning, to be repeated the next hour. These were selected as a result of discussing what themes appeared in the novel which would lend themselves to talks and workshops: Dr. James Heldman, University of Kentucky, "Where is Jane Austen in *The Watsons*? - narrative voice in the novel"; Dr. John Norris, UBC, "Sam is Only a Surgeon, You Know" - the status of medical practitioners of the time; Judith Terry, UVic, "Knit Your Own Stuff" - the sequels, and the success or failure of completions of *The Watsons*; Clifford Collier, Toronto: "Uncommonly Fond of Dancing" - a talk on dances and the etiquette of the dance, and a practice session of one or two dances; and Mary Margaret Benson, Linfield College, McMinnville, Oregon: a talk on round games in the novels, and a chance to play some of the common games. The programme went off very well, except for a complaint from the next room that there was too much noise and laughter coming from the games session!

For the Saturday banquet, a piper in full Highland dress - very impressive - piped in the guests at the High Table. The banquet featured foods mentioned in *The Watsons*, and specialties of our Northwest Coast. This was followed by the breathtaking dramatic performance of *Our*

Own Particular Jane, written by Joan Austen-Leigh, and perfectly performed by Judith and Reg Terry, Patricia Wainman-Wood, and Anthony Jenkins. [A cassette is in our library - enjoy it!]

Instead of the usual Sunday Brunch in the hotel, we arranged a double-decker bus to take members to the Bayshore marina, to the *Malibu Princess* for a tour of the harbour and past the Expo site, with luncheon served on board. Sunday afternoon options included a chartered bus tour of the Vancouver area, walking tours (free) of the historical areas of downtown Vancouver, guided by several of our members, or visits to Expo.

I think almost everyone enjoyed the conference and the visit to Vancouver. In fact, when I go to conferences in other cities now, someone usually comes up to me and mentions remembering the Vancouver conference with great pleasure. It was quite a feat for our small, inexperienced but very enthusiastic group. I was proud of those who put so much effort into all the details, and those speakers and performers who donated their time so willingly.

Some of the "fun" extras: Keiko remembered that the City of Vancouver had proclaimed a "Jon Kimura Parker Day" in honour of her son's musical achievements, and she made arrangements for the Saturday of our conference to be declared "Jane Austen Day" (The Mayor was unable to attend, but his deputy performed the appropriate ceremony.) We were also able to read out a message of congratulations from the Queen. (It is quite easy to accomplish: simply send greetings to the Queen, and she politely reciprocates with a message from her Private Secretary: "Please convey the sincere thanks of the Queen to all members of the Jane Austen Society of North America for their kind message of loyal greetings, sent on the occasion of...etc.")

The hard work and great fun of the conference brought our group together as perhaps nothing else could - besides resulting in new members. For the next year or two we had more frequent meetings, mostly held in the Sutherland home, but the group was becoming a little too large for comfort in a private home. In 1989, at the suggestion of Mary Anderson, we began our long and satisfactory association with St. Philip's Church, meeting in the Fireside Room. Then, too, we decided on an annual special Jane Austen Day programme, at some site where we could be pampered with a catered and served luncheon, and when we could enjoy a longer programme of two or three events.

We have, over the years, had excellent speakers, slide lectures, musical selections, dance demonstrations, and dramatic presentations, many of the most enjoyable being given by our own talented members - whom we thank very much indeed. We have had expeditions to Fort Langley, to the Special Collections at UBC, and to the very civilized "wilds of West Vancouver" to regale ourselves with strawberries at the home of Joan Mann. We have watched videos, listened to tapes, and heard parts of Jane Austen's novels spoken in a dozen different languages. Under the capable management of Viviane McClelland and later Dianne Kerr, the library has built up a collection of books, tapes, videos, literary papers, clippings, and newsletters from other regions: please borrow them and enjoy them.

The eighteen years have passed quickly. I cannot actually say that I have enjoyed every minute of them, but mostly it has been lots of fun. I look back at the time with pride and a feeling of achievement, which could not have happened without the willing help of many members - we have made a good team through the years. Now I want to retire, and relax, and I know I am leaving the group in capable hands. And I am sure you will give Keiko all the enthusiastic and willing support you have always given to me.

LOOKING FORWARD - Keiko Parker.

Keiko Parker was born and educated in Tokyo, Japan. She received her B.A. in English Literature from the Tokyo Women's Christian University. At that time her major interest was Shakespeare, and her graduation thesis on *King Lear* was published as part of the University Academy's Award.

Keiko then came to Canada to marry John, her longtime pen pal. Following her arrival in Canada and marriage, she first started to read Jane Austen. A casual reading of *Pride and Prejudice*, an edition John had used at U.B.C., was the beginning of her life-long enthusiasm over Jane Austen.

After several years of study, Keiko received her A.R.C.T. Teacher's Degree from the Royal Conservatory of Toronto, and over the last thirty-eight years she has been a busy teacher of piano and music theory. Unlike the majority of piano teachers, she revels in teaching the theoretical subjects of music, including Harmony, Music History, Counterpoint, and Analysis! Among her former theory students are her own sons, Jon Kimura Parker and Jamie Parker, her daughter, Liz Parker, the violinist Corey Cerovsek, and countless members of the younger generation of piano teachers. Her daughter Elizabeth Anne, now manager of communications at the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, is named after the heroines of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Persuasion*.

Throughout her busy teaching career, Keiko kept up her reading of Jane Austen's novels, and in 1989 she enrolled at U.B.C. as a part-time student, graduating in 1993 with her M.A. in English.

Keiko's main interest besides music and Jane Austen, is collecting illustrated editions of novels, especially those of Jane Austen. Her favourite illustrators are Hugh Thomson, C.E. Brock, and Joan Hassal. Keiko was one of a small group of people invited by Joan Austen-Leigh to the first meeting of what is now JASNA Vancouver Region. She has given several slide presentations on illustrations of Jane Austen novels and Jane Austen-related subjects, both at the Vancouver meetings and the AGM, as well as to other groups. Her other activities include being Associate Editor of the Newsletter of the Shakespeare Society of Vancouver. Keiko also loves sewing and knitting, and does volunteer work as a speaker/lecturer for a group of Japanese adults interested in learning to appreciate Western classical music.

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GRANNY'S TEETH IN BATH

In the latest catalogue from Jane Austen Books, Pat Latkin describes Lyme Regis Camera by John Fowles: "a photo-bio of a Dorset village taken from 1850 to present", and then she adds:

"Some think almost certainly wrongly, according to Mr. Fowles, that the Granny Steps are the steps Jane Austen made Louisa Musgrove fall down in Persuasion."

Fowles lived for some years in Lyme Regis, and made the town the setting for The French Lieutenant's Woman. One would expect him to be an expert on the sites of Lyme Regis, but I have never heard this version before.

Has anyone read this book? Or does anyone know of any definite authentic reference to the place where Louisa fell? Please let us know.

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SPECIAL EXHIBITION IN ENGLAND

Fairfax House, Castlegate, York, is one of the finest 18th century townhouses in England, and is the site of special exhibitions in 1999/2000. If you have plans to be in England this coming season, you may be interested in them.

The Keeping of Christmas - December 3 - January 6, 2000

18th c. room decorations, table settings and Georgian atmosphere for the festive season.

Eat, Drink and Be Merry - February 26 - June 4, 2000

400 years of festive tradition from the Jacobean Banquet to the Victorian high tea and the multi-cultural cuisine of the present day. Set-piece period displays and table settings are complemented by British paintings and decorative art drawn from collections country-wide.

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday and Saturday 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sundays 1:30 - 5:00.
Closed Fridays.



“I shall be found by the fire, I suppose,
O’er a great wise book as beseemeth age,
While the shutters flap as the cross-wind blows
And I turn the page, and I turn the page.”

-Robert Browning: By the Fireside.

Windows, in any language.

Loveday Conquest, in *The Jane Austen Times*, August 1999, wrote about the etymology of “ha-ha” (perhaps from an exclamation of surprise), and then gave this interesting note about “the French term vasistas, referring to a certain type of window [a fan-light or transom]. The etymology is from “Was ist das?” in German, since this type of window was apparently unknown in that country.”

[Could anyone give a date for the period this word came into French? E.S.]

Hannah More

“If a Ladies’ Trophy - or any trophy - for eloquence were to be awarded, Hannah More would take it. Intense, sincere, minatory, alarmingly effective, she attacks Rousseau with even more trenchancy than Mary Wollstonecraft had done. Anyone bemused by all the fuss about acting *Lovers’ Vows* in *Mansfield Park* has only to read More on the German Drama. There is, she warns, a destruction which lurks under harmless or instructive names of ‘General History,’ ‘Natural History,’ ‘Travels,’ ‘Voyages,’ ‘Lives,’ ‘Encyclopedias’ : ‘who will deny that many of these works contain...just descriptions, faithful pictures of nature, and valuable illustrations of science? But... the dead fly lies at the bottom of the glass...’ ”

Review by Nora Crook, of *Romantic Period Writings 1798-1832. An anthology: Zachary Lauder and Ian Haywood.* (TLS March 5, 1999)

From Your Regional Coordinator (October 17, 1999) by Keiko Parker

The October 16 meeting began with business reports from the Colorado Springs AGM, which was attended by over 450 members. I put on display a montage photo of the mountains which I took from our hotel window; a little book written by Diana Birchall entitled "In Defense of Mrs. Elton," illustrated by Juliet McMaster; the Regency Recital programme for the Saturday night piano recital (with very interesting programme notes); and the Saturday Banquet favours (a large postcard with ten of the C.E. Brock illustrations of *Emma* and a heart-shaped box of mints tied with a ribbon with names such as "Emma and George," "Jane and Frank," "Harriet and Robert," or "Augusta and Philip." I shall now mention some of the news given at the Regional Coordinators' Meeting.

1) The **essay contest** is to be **resumed** for high-school and university students. There will be cash and other prizes.

2) News regarding the upcoming AGMs:

Oct. 13 - 15, 2000—Boston, "*Pride and Prejudice*, Past, Present and Future." This is not the Columbus Day Weekend. "The Head of the Charles" Races will be held on the same weekend, so that one will not find other accommodation besides the Park Plaza Hotel. Accommodation is expensive, but the hotel has promised 25 rooms with a 4-person occupancy.

Oct. 5 - 7, 2001—Seattle, "Entertainment and Jane Austen" at the Cavanaugh's on 5th Ave. If you would like to present a paper, please submit a 1-page abstract.

Oct. 10 - 14, 2002—Toronto, "Jane Austen's World—Artistic, Domestic, Political and Social." This will be held at the Toronto Hilton which is undergoing renovation now.

2nd week of October, 2003—the New York Region will host the AGM **in Winchester and Chawton**, entitled "Homecoming." The all-inclusive fee (airfare, hotel, registration, and ground transportation) is \$2,000 - \$2,200 U.S. The Board's suggestion is to drop the airfare from the total (minus \$600 - \$700) so that people can get there ahead of time and recover from jet-lag. (Then, we will be awake for the AGM!)

There are going to be several discounts to make the whole trip attractive:

a) **20% off** for those who register 18 months ahead (before Apr., 2002) with a non-refundable \$200 deposit.

b) In Regions where more than 15 people register, each member will receive a **further 5%** discount.

c) If you attend the Toronto AGM the year before, you will receive a **further 8%** discount. Thus, one may qualify for a total of a 33% discount. Also, there will be a raffle for a free Winchester/Chawton registration package at the Toronto AGM (proceeds to the Toronto Region). The AGM will include a visit to The Vine and Steventon, and the optional tour includes Lyme Regis, Bath, and Weymouth. All of this sounds very exciting, doesn't it? They suggest that if beginning in January, 2000, you **put aside \$12.00 per week**, you will have sufficient funds to attend this AGM. I will keep you posted on the latest news on this AGM.

3) **Membership dues** are now payable. Please pay the Vancouver Region fee (\$15.00) to our treasurer, **Caroline Warner**, at the November or December meeting, or mail your cheque to her

at #307 - 1930 W. 3rd Ave., Vancouver, B.C., V6J 1L1.

The **JASNA CANADA** fee is payable when Nancy Stokes sends you the notice. You are encouraged to make a **tax-deductible donation**, large or small, for specific projects. Last year, our donation money went to St. Nicholas in Chawton (not Steventon) for repair work, and next year it will go to St. Swithin's in Bath for a plaque commemorating Mr. Austen (Jane's father who was married and buried there) and to the Jane Austen Memorial Trust to complete the archives.

4) The **Victoria Region** has won the Travelling Lecturer's Grant for the year 2000 (the one we won this year), and their meeting will be held on **Sat., Sept. 23, 2000** at **St. Luke's** church hall at **2 - 4 p.m.** Dr. Inger Brodie will talk on "Who Can Be in Doubt of What Followed? Jane Austen's Puzzling Endings." Vancouver members are cordially invited. Jean Oriente is inquiring about reserving bus seats for those Vancouver members who wish to attend the event. This should eliminate the nuisance of having to wait for "the next sailing" and missing the lecture.

5) The **movie "Mansfield Park"** will open in Vancouver on **Fri., Nov. 12**. It has received critical acclaim at both the Montreal and Toronto Film Festivals. John Griffin of The Gazette has written "*Mansfield Park* is a dazzlingly accomplished take on the Jane Austen novel that combines familiar characters, period images and plot to entertain and gently provoke. . . . stunning visuals, sparkling dialogue, respectful rejigging of intent, and wonderful acting by the relatively uncelebrated Frances O'Connor, Jonny Lee Miller, Embeth Davidtz and Alessandro Nivola, and the hugely celebrated Harold Pinter . . ." No less a film critic than Roger Ebert commented, "Canadian director Patricia Rozema's *Mansfield Park* identifies with Jane Austen's intelligence rather than her atmosphere; among recent adaptations, it's closer to *Persuasion* than *Sense and Sensibility*. . . . Of the films I saw at Toronto this year, *Mansfield Park* has the best shot at a best-picture nomination." Can you see his "Thumbs Up"?

I shall arrange **distribution** of the newly designed **JASNA brochure** on opening day, and several members have volunteered to help me. If you are coming to the Nov. 12 opening and wish to join our effort at this **membership drive**, please phone Keiko Parker at **299-4831**.

6) **Margaret Howell** has again selected Georgian and Regency **recipes** for our **Christmas/Jane Austen Birthday Luncheon** to be held on **December 11**. I have made copies, and some members have already selected a recipe. If you have not done so, please take a recipe at the November meeting. Also for the December meeting, bring a suitable passage to read regarding food—Christmas or birthday—from Jane Austen or contemporary writers.

I wish to thank those who participated at the October meeting by reporting on Break-out Sessions at the AGM or by expressing their response to various articles in the latest issue of *Persuasions*.

To end my first letter to you as your Regional Coordinator, I wish to thank those who spoke kindly of my first effort at convening a meeting. I am greatly encouraged by the fact that I am among friends and the knowledge that you wish me well. It is a daunting task to follow in Eileen Sutherland's footsteps, but, with your help, I will do my best. See you at the next meeting!



London Theatre - September Meeting.

One of Jane Austen's pleasures in London was going to the theatre. Her letters to Cassandra mention plays, actors and actresses, and her opinion of their performances. Jane expresses her criticisms decisively, and seems to expect Cassandra to be as interested and knowledgeable as herself: her description of their little niece Cassy was "she will never be a Miss O'Neal; - more in the Mrs. Siddons line."

Jane Austen's comments give us only a tantalizing glimpse of the theatre in London. At the September meeting, however, Christine Dewar spoke to us on Mrs. Sarah Kemble Siddons and Edmund Kean: Two Portraits from the Gallery of Players on the London Stage in the Time of Jane Austen. Her talk was lively, informative and thoroughly enjoyable, bringing the London theatre scene to life and filling the gaps in our knowledge with facts, anecdotes and authoritative opinions.

London was the largest city in the world in 1800, and growing rapidly with the impact of industrialization and urbanization. The theatres responded to this influx: Covent Garden, originally designed for 600, was increased in size to accommodate 3,000; Drury Lane was increased to 3,500. The theatres offered great variety, with tragedies, comedies, farce, melodrama and pantomime. Some theatres were set up with the audience seated at tables eating a meal, perhaps with trapeze artists whirling overhead. Comic cross-dressing had universal appeal.

The repertory changed often - some companies had as many as 30 permanent performers who specialized as heroes, villains, clowns, etc. The evening playbill was extended to five or six hours, giving lots of opportunity for diversion, change of pace, variety of action. In general, actors were employed by the season, and their contracts could end when the season was over. Often companies made a circuit of provincial theatres after the London season, to take advantage of the publicity about London successes, or to recoup their losses.

Dominating early 19th century theatrical performances was the star of the company. Mrs. Siddons and her brother John Philip Kemble were members of an acting family who had been an institution on the stage for several generations. Kemble, an actor-manager, lacked spontaneity but had great dignity on the stage. Because of the size of the theatres, a performer required great vocal control and presence to project his voice and feelings to the back of the house. If a star was not charismatic, an audience might show rejection by pelting him with vegetables, shouting him down, or merely losing interest and moving around the theatre looking for friends to talk to, or to engage in flirtation.

Sarah Kemble Siddons began her stage career as a child. Although born into a theatrical family, she was nervous, clumsy and timid - and found no mercy from the crowd. But this difficult early experience steeled her, and eventually she found her niche in domestic tragedy, and became one of the great actresses of the age. She was capable of descending into madness, rage, despair - members of the audience wept, or fainted; Sheridan sobbed audibly in his box; the Queen had to turn her back to preserve her dignity, and King George III came five times to see one of her performances.

Edmund Kean was the great male star of the time. He was a wild man, with tremendous power. Christine Dewar quoted Coleridge: "To see Kean act was to read Shakespeare by flashes of lightning." There was nothing naturalistic about 18-19th century acting - Kean would strike a pose, position himself in his role, while he declaimed his lines, and the audience might count to see how long before he moved. He was an alcoholic and a womanizer, but he had great creative energy. He received £50 for each performance, and the audience knew his value.

Later, the great actor David Garrick did much to naturalize stage performance, and Eliza O'Neill, a successor to Mrs. Siddons, showed much more overt emotion.

Covent Garden burned in 1808, Drury Lane in 1809. Both were rebuilt the next year, but the tremendous loss of costumes, jewelry, books and music could never be replaced.

Christine Dewar teaches History of the Theatre at Douglas College - we envy her students.

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Recommended reading: That Despicable Race: Brian Forbes; The Kemble Era: Linda Kelly; The Rivals. History of Drama in English: Clifford Leach & T.W.Craik, eds.; The London Theatre from the Globe to the National: James Roos-Evans.

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OCTOBER MEETING - Joan Mann and Betty Stephen.

This meeting combined the two popular themes of Reports from the Conference, and Readers' Responses to Persuasions.

President Keiko Parker opened the meeting with a welcome to all present; and made a few business announcements. She reported highlights of the AGM at Colorado Springs, which had 452 (including 60 men) in attendance. Keiko reminded members about their annual dues and asked members to select a Georgian recipe (courtesy Margaret Howell) and bring a special dish to the December meeting.

Keiko announced the coming film of *Mansfield Park*, which has had excellent reviews, and asked for volunteers to help hand out membership information at the opening.

Murray Wanamaker, Phyllis Taylor and John Parker gave reports on some of the breakout sessions they attended at the October conference (There were about three dozen break-out sessions, of which members could choose to attend three.)

Murray spoke eloquently and amusingly on the themes of 'Reading *Emma* at an all-male college,' 'A comparison of Joseph Campbell and Jane Austen' and 'The themes of the Bible and *Emma*.' Phyllis gave a delightful and interesting summary of 'Letter writing in Jane Austen's England' - the intriguing background of the British Postal system. John Parker was succinct (by Keiko's decree) but comprehensive in his discussion of 'Music, character and social standing' - Jane Austen and Shakespeare have much in common. John also mentioned his appreciation of the musical attractions at the conference, and especially enjoyed the reading of *Robin Adair*.

Jean Oriente called for readers' responses to several articles in the latest *Persuasions*. Irene Howard commented on the article on contemporary biography - she could identify with the problems and was enthusiastic about the researcher. About another talk, Irene commented on the coming of peace to the Continent, bad personal loans and the depressed economy that bankrupted Henry Austen, 'Jane Austen's Banker Brother.' Sandy Lundy reviewed 'Jane Austen - the French Connection' by Joan Austen-Leigh, and found it well researched and amusingly presented. Joan Mann gave an informed and interesting account of the article 'Henry Tilney, Rector of Woodston.' Viviane McClelland enlightened the group with her review of 'Clothing the Thought in the Word' about the speakers in *Emma*. Virgil Oriente read his daughter Rachele's account of 'Jane Austen and the Trollopes' which brought many interesting details to light.

All members who gave their time and effort to help make the October meeting so stimulating and enlightening were commended and thanked.



"Fiction is like a spider's web, attached ever so lightly perhaps, but still attached to life at all four corners." (Virginia Woolf)

"A good book is the best of friends, the same today and for ever." (Martin F. Tupper)

"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents." (Emille Buchwald)

Life at Sea in the 18th Century.

Early in October, Vancouverites had a chance to experience what Jane Austen's brothers knew so well - life in a British sailing vessel. A replica of Captain Cook's *Endeavour* made a visit to Vancouver, and the public was allowed on board to see for themselves how a sailor lived.

the Arctic, accurately charting the Australian coast and the northwest coast of North America.



The original *Endeavour* was a 550-tonne converted coal carrier. Cook, a Yorkshireman who had gone to sea in the coal trade before joining the Royal Navy, knew that such a slow but solidly-built sturdy vessel was ideal for the voyages of exploration he was about to attempt. In 1768 he left on the first of three scientific voyages to survey the Pacific Ocean from New Zealand to the Arctic, accurately charting the Australian coast and the northwest coast of North America.

The Australian National Maritime Museum proposed to build a full-scale museum replica of Cook's vessel, funded by private and corporate donations, to promote understanding of 18th century sailing techniques, and the impact of Captain Cook's voyages around the world.

This new Endeavour, a three-masted, square-rigged bark, was built as close to the precise historical specifications as possible, while still meeting modern maritime safety standards. There are no mechanical winches - all hauling is done by man-power; materials were lashed and pegged together instead of welded and bolted. The original hold was converted to refrigeration space, engine room (engines are only used in calm weather, in order to keep to a schedule), mess room, galley and bathrooms. Officers live in cabins with 4'6" headroom; the crew sling hammocks in the mess deck.

Cook had a crew of 90; today's vessel carries 18 professional sailors as permanent crew, and 34 volunteers who sign up for specified parts of the journey. Two Vancouver reporters, Stephen Hume of the *Vancouver Sun*, and Nigel Hastings, writing in the *North Shore News*, made part of the voyage on board, and wrote of their experiences. Hastings described climbing the rigging with the mast swinging around 10-15 degrees, with the wind up to 40 knots and the seas up to 20 feet. He felt that the expression "the wind was howling through the rigging" took on a significant new meaning. Hume learned, the hard way, why 18th century sailors were called "tars". Tar was used to preserve the ship's upper rigging from rot and mildew. Tar oozes out of the wooden blocks. It clings to sailors' hands as they scramble up the shrouds to furl the sails or mount lookouts. It is very difficult to remove from hands, hair and clothing.

When Royal Navy sailors were not tending to the sails, they were kept busy polishing brass and scrubbing every surface from stem to stern, above and below decks, every day. The sailors on today's *Endeavour* do the same, to keep the ship spotless for the visitors who come by the tens of thousands when the ship is in port and hosts tours. Even a brief visit on board such a vessel gives one some idea of the hardship and danger of a sailor's life, as Jane Austen must often have heard her brothers describe it.

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This Newsletter, the publication of the Vancouver Region of the Jane Austen Society of North America, is issued four times a year: February, May, August, and November. All submissions on the subject of Jane Austen, her life, her works and her times, are welcome. Mail to the Editor: Eileen Sutherland, 4169 Lions Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. V7R 3S2. Price to non-members: \$4.00 per year.