



Jane Austen Society of North America
Vancouver Chapter

Newsletter No. 112

March 2011

The Vancouver Chapter held its 2010 celebration of Jane Austen's birthday on December 11, her natal day being Dec 16, 1775. First we attended to some brief matters of enjoyable business. A rousing cheer with applause was given to **Norah Morrow** for all her years of service as kitchen coordinator, and she was presented with a number of thank you gifts, including an Austen-themed apron. Our regional director, **Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer**, was pleased to announce that members have donated over \$2000 in **Eileen Sutherland's** name, to be forwarded to UBC for our Austen prize in the Department of English.

We then proceeded to a lovely concert where soprano **Margaret Behenna** was accompanied by pianist **Susan Edwards** and sang songs by Thomas Arne and Robbie Burns as well as *The Dream* and *Weep No More Sad Fountains*, which Patrick Doyle composed for the Emma Thompson film *Sense and Sensibility*. Our main presentation (featured below) was about Georgian gardens and flowers and included a demonstration of Regency- style seasonal flower arranging.



The morning was rounded off when **Mary Atkins** gave a lively reading from Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and we all toasted the immortal Jane before tucking in to a delicious "pot luck" lunch with main course provided by **Barbara Phillips**. In the afternoon, the St. Phillip's Church Hall was the location for English Country Dancing, led by dance mistress **Marie Disiewicz**, the performers having been guided by the contemporary Rules of the Assembly, modified and selected from the original Rules and printed into a souvenir booklet.

The featured speaker was our own **Patricia McLean**, who has a B.A. and M.F.A. from UBC, and has had a most varied career-- as a literary publicist, writer, teacher of creative floral design and owner of a flower shop. What follows is the text of her interesting talk and demonstration.

Austen in Bloom

When I think of flowers in Jane Austen's time, two things come to mind: gardens and weddings; and there are, of course, many references to both throughout her literature.

England was still very much an agricultural nation in Austen's time and the characters in her books lived in the country, where farming was a way of life. A gentleman's estate was valued by the income made by farming the land himself (through a steward or bailiff who

managed the business) or by collecting rent received from tenants. Additionally, there was also the need for poultry yards, cows and kitchen gardens to supply the rural household with everyday foodstuffs.

Aside from these very business-like or utilitarian images of country estates, there seemed to be no shortage of gardens that existed exclusively to provide people with a place to rest or take their daily exercise. One of my favourite quotes is from *Pride and Prejudice* when Lady Catherine refers to the Bennets as having “a prettyish kind of a little wilderness on one side of your lawn.” The other reference that stands out in my mind is when Mr. Collins invites his guests to stroll in his garden and we learn that Charlotte encourages him to spend as much time in tending the plants as possible.

Of course in these instances Austen uses the garden as a backdrop or setting for key interactions between her characters, but it also indicates how significant a part the garden played in Regency life. Austen’s novels provide us with an endearing look at the English garden of the time, complete with gravel paths, shrubberies, ponds, fruit trees, flowers, and even green-houses. Before the early 1800s, landscaping was all about creating a natural looking garden that incorporated the vistas of the surrounding countryside, as the splash of colour from a flower garden was thought to disrupt the scene. However, with the advent of smaller estates and new plant species being brought back by explorers, there was a sudden surge in the popularity of a blooming garden.

Although many flowers are not named specifically in Austen’s books (aside from the occasional rose) other publications of the time tell us what we could expect to find in the Regency garden. One way to identify the flowers that were popular during Austen’s time is to examine the colours that were so prominent in Regency fashion.

Coquelicot (the French name for field poppies) This red was at the height of fashion throughout the period, but was such a bold colour that well-bred young ladies would only be permitted its use for trimming and accessories.

Jonquil (a small scented daffodil) This true yellow was the colour of the 1801 season.

Primrose (both the common and evening variety) The soft mild yellow is suitable for daywear; the deeper, brighter yellow was seen in gloves and boots and was most popular from 1807 to 1817.

Pomona (the Greek goddess of orchards) In this case the colour of the green apples, not the blossom, was used for both trimmings and whole gowns.

Another way to identify the typical flowers found in a Regency garden is to look at the ‘flower dictionaries’ that flourished in England in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, wife of the British ambassador to Constantinople, wrote home from Turkey about ‘the secret language of flowers’ which inspired numerous publications that were popular in the days of George IV through 1840.

Of course, once we start examining the individual flowers themselves, it is natural to think of how these blooms might be used beyond the garden, and in Jane Austen’s world they would ultimately be destined for a wedding. Brides of the time would carry herbs, greenery and flowers that were in season and that could be acquired from the garden, the meadow or even alongside the road. Only the very rich could afford hot house flowers out of season. Roses were undoubtedly popular, as were peonies, sweet peas, lilies and delphinium.

However, the brides choice of flower was dictated by meaning and symbolism rather than colour or shape, though small posies were the norm early in the 19th century. Bridesmaids were responsible for making the flower decorations, the boutonniere and the bride's bouquet.

Here is a list of typical 'Austenish' flowers and their meanings.....

Apple blossom	preference		
Anemone	forsaken		
Azalea	temperence		
Basil	hatred		
Columbine	folly		
Daffodil	regard		
Daisy	innocence	Peony	bashfulness
Delphinium	fickle	Primrose	consistency
Foxglove	insincerity	Rhododendron	beware
Iris	message	Rose	love
Ivy	fidelity	Sage	domestic virtue
Lavender	distrust	Sweet Pea	farewell
Lilac	first love	Sweet William	gallantry
Lily	purity	Thistle	defiance
Marigold	sorrow	Tulip	fame
Morning Glory	affection	Violet	faithfulness
Myrtle	love and marriage	Water Lily	pure of heart
Oak	hospitality	Zinnia	thoughts of absent
Pansy	thoughtfulness		friends



Floral Basket on J.A. quilt

(Patricia concluded her talk with a short quiz, on which we did very well, as she had distributed sheets with the names of flowers and their meanings)

Can you tell which wedding bouquet would be suitable for these characters from *Pride and Prejudice*?

- ~ Elizabeth Bennet - rose, ivy
- ~ Lydia Bennet - thistle, columbine, delphinium
- ~ Lady Catherine de Bourgh – basil, lavender, foxglove
- ~ Jane Bennet- daisy, violet, primrose
- ~ Charlotte Lucas - azalea, sage, zinnia

*Following the quiz, Patricia created a seasonal arrangement before our very eyes, using greenery from her own back garden, and hedgerows and back lanes of her neighbourhood. These were gathered much as ladies would have done in Jane Austen's time. Patricia showed us a neat trick on how to cut down the holly branches so that the red berries would be prominent. The lucky winner of Patricia's arrangement was **Adrienne Salvail-Lopez**. Apropos of this floral theme, **Marjorie Johnson** tipped us off about a book which is in hot demand at the Vancouver Public Library: **The Paper Garden: Decoupage, Collage and Flowers in Art**, by **Molly Peacock**.*

Book Review from Jane Austen Society, U.K.

The following book review is published with the kind permission of David Selwyn, editor of the Jane Austen Society's News Letter, and chairman of the U.K. organization. I think it is priceless.

Reading Jane Austen. Mona Scheuermann (Palgrave Macmillan) ISBN: 978-0-230-61877-0
Reviewed by ***Diana White***

It's just as well our Editor is someone to like and admire otherwise I might harbour some very uncharitable thoughts about him! At an age when the list of books I have to get through before complete decrepitude sets in is greater than the list of books I've read, not to mention the list of books I want to read again – no prizes for guessing which – it is very hard to be given books to review that do not feature on any of these lists. Not even slightly.

To be scrupulously fair, *Reading Jane Austen* is not that bad, but only if you are totally ignorant about everything to do with her and have absolutely no knowledge of English history. If you fall into that category then this book will be very helpful.

Ms. Scheuermann is an American so has a slightly transatlantic vocabulary, but on the whole she writes clearly without any of those ridiculous words that sound learned but which are all sound and fury and incomprehensible. This is a bonus. She is also knowledgeable about Thomas Paine and Hannah More, both of whom she quotes at length. Why? I shall enlighten you. *Mansfield Park*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma* and *Persuasion* (what made her leave out *Sense and Sensibility* and *Northanger Abbey* is anyone's guess, but there we are, they don't get a mention) are discussed in relation to English politics, the Napoleonic wars and the social unrest in dear old Blighty (subjects which naturally include Paine and More) to illustrate how these subjects influenced Jane Austen's writing. Most importantly, she uses both Paine and More to describe the social structure of the period, the main focus of the book. A subject about which, of course, we are all completely ignorant, are we not?

The trouble is, Americans tend to forget that we English have been brought up with the fine tuning of the social distinctions that feature in JA's novels; we don't need explanations, and especially not when they are by an American who hasn't entirely understood the complexities of the social structure herself. Ms. Scheuermann, as a consequence of this imperfect appreciation, comes up with some slightly dodgy conclusions, which is irritating. However, for those who do require explanations of the subtleties of the English social divisions and the morality associated with them; whose knowledge of the class system as defined by money is also rudimentary; who know absolutely zilch about the historical background against which JA wrote; then this book will shed some light. Not a searchlight, mind you, but sufficient to give the ignorant a clue. Further reading will be desirable, preferably written by someone English.

But credit where credit is due, never let it be said I am prejudiced or unfair. Ms. Scheuermann does her best and for A level students (or whatever the US equivalent is), or someone with a literary bent but little historical knowledge who is approaching JA for the first time, there is some useful comment and good information.

But as always, dear friends, *Reading Jane Austen* will not evoke serendipity in your hearts and minds as you discover some new and exciting fact or thought on which to dwell. There is nothing in this book you don't already know.

I am now going to get back to reading something from my long list of the 18th century books I should have read but didn't (Maria Edgeworth, actually) and will doubtless be in touch with you again to exhort you not to waste your time on something else unsuitable for the JA Society members. In the immortal words of The Cisco Kid: Adios amigos... see you soon!

Diana White

Other books which were pretty well rubbished in issue #35 of the News Letter, and on which it is suggested readers not waste their money, are:

- *Jane Austen Dictionary*, by Paulene E. Kelly (Ink Well Publishing)
- *Fashion in the Time of Jane Austen*, by Sarah Jane Downing (Shire)
- *Reading and its Contribution to World Culture*, by Rupert Willoughby (privately published)
- *Jane Austen: An Unrequited Love*, by Andrew Norman (The History Press)

Joan Reynolds, who is a member of the British society, has generously lent me several issues of their News Letter, and David Selwyn has given me carte blanche to reprint anything which takes my fancy. His most recent book, Jane Austen and Children (Continuum) was reviewed appreciatively by Maggie Lane in this October 2010 issue, and Mr. Selwyn favourably reviewed The Fortune Hunter: A German Prince in Regency England, by Peter James Bowman, and published by Signal. - contributed by the Editor

Retrospectives on Portland AGM at our November gathering

A huge fall of snow was not enough to deter Vancouver members from attending on November 20, 2010. A few items of business were attended to, before we heard about the AGM in Portland on October 28-31. **Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer** was acclaimed as Regional Director for another two years, to much applause. She was pleased to announce that donations in Eileen Sutherland's name have been coming in, and they will be forwarded to UBC to be added to the fund for JASNA's book prize. **Marg Savery** has gallantly taken on the job of kitchen coordinator, as Norah Morrow has retired after years of yeoman service. Also, members present formally approved the allocation of monies to our Speaker's Fund, and are hoping to invite Juliet McMaster in 2011.

What follows are a few samples of the entertaining reports which were given by some of the 15 members from Vancouver who attended the conference Jane Austen and the Abbey: Mystery, Mayhem, and Muslin, in Portland.

Pam Ottridge gave an overview of attractions, which included an exhibit at the County Library of early editions, manuscripts and original 18th century cartoons by Gilroy and Rowlandson; Garland dancers; and beautiful historically-correct replicas of period costumes in the Milsom Street Emporium, not forgetting another great emporium in Portland, Powell's City of Books, which styles itself the world's largest bookstore.

The theme of the conference being *Northanger Abbey*, the hero of choice was Henry Tilney, and **Joan Reynolds** gave a rousing report on an event styled as a panel discussion entitled "Team Tilney Explains it All". This turned out to be a panel discussion with performance when a Portland-area actor named Jeff Homes turned up to play the part of the handsome young divine. It all went to prove that these Janeites are red-blooded modern girls, albeit they did have recourse to vigorous use of their fans to ward off fainting and the vapours, when their hearts began to throb too much.

Jennifer Bettiol and **Marie Disiewicz** both attended a session on textiles and fashion, and Marie and **Joan Reynolds** talked about dance, both the actual ball and a session entitled ‘The Rules of the Assembly’. Joan had kindly lent me the comprehensive binder she had collected, which provided information one could only access “by being there”, such as vendors and merchants present. For those interested in antique china and porcelain, Linda Slothouber of Cottleston-Pye Antiques (www.cottlestonpye.com) wrote about china spotting in Emma Thompson’s *Sense and Sensibility*, mentioning the Japanese Imari pattern on the table at Barton Park. Shapes and designs of early china can be seen at www.chinacupboard.co.uk

A facsimile copy of the fashionable magazine “La Belle Assemblee” from 1809 was one of the handouts. Well! this is a most instructive read, being a tabloid putting to shame our tame modern versions of the genre, and probably providing plenty of fuel for the gothic imagination. Some of the headlines are “A Libertine Reclaimed”, “Attempted Suicides”, “Most Daring Street Robbery”, “Coroner’s Inquest” of a suicide by drowning, with a verdict of insanity; “Tragical Event” of a boating accident with several surviving and several corpses recovered; among others; and cheek-by-jowl with a charming pattern for a pretty night cap and a muslin frock. Which demonstrates, to my mind at least, what a wild and woolly bunch the English of the Georgian era were.

Many of us will be looking forward to the next issue of Persuasions, which will be devoted to the 2010 AGM. Allison Thompson’s “Rules of the Assembly” is now available at Persuasions on-line (<http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line>) Readers may recall that in our most recent newsletter (#111) we reprinted an account of a Georgian Dinner at Fort York. Now, this may have been a fine effort for the colonials in a backwater like Upper Canada, but Allison Thompson gives an account of what they could do at Windsor Castle:

“The supper was as lavish as one’s budget would allow, and those at court were indeed fairytale-like. For example, to celebrate the recovery of King George III from his first bout of madness in 1789, the Queen gave a ball and supper. The hall was beautifully illuminated, and everything was of the greatest splendour and richness. That part of the supper which was hot consisted of twenty tureens of different soups, roast ducks, turkey-pouts, cygnets, green geese, land-rails, chickens, asparagus, peas and beans. The cold parts of the collation were the same kind of poultry boned, and swimming or standing in the centre of transparent jellies, where they were supported by paste pillars, not in circumference thicker than a knitting needle. This, with the lights playing from the candles, and reflected by the polish of the plates and dishes, made a most beautiful appearance. Cray-fish pies of all kinds were distributed with great taste; and the hams and brawn in masquerade, swimming on the surface of pedestals of jelly, seemingly supported but by the strength of an apparent liquid, excited general admiration.”

At the November meeting, additional reports were given by **Elsbeth Flood** on Jane Austen’s Horatio Hero; **Pam Ottridge** on Northanger Abbey and the Horrors of the European Novel; and **Phyllis Bottomer** on The Business of Being a Janeite. **Catherine Morley** was snowed in, and couldn’t talk on The Suite Life. *Report by Sandy Lundy*



“Doubting Mr. Darcy” as a Lover, but not a Brother

At its October, 2010 meeting, the Vancouver Chapter was fortunate to have as its speaker **Dr. Elaine Bander**, the president of JASNA Canada. She and Renee Charron, the national treasurer, stopped in on their way to the AGM in Portland, and brought greetings, information about a generous gift of books by Margaret MacLean to the national library, along with invitations and information on how to borrow from this fine collection.

Elaine, who is a retired teacher of English from Dawson College in Montreal, gave a talk entitled “Doubting Mr. Darcy”. She admitted, at the beginning of this presentation, that she was prompted to re-read *Pride and Prejudice* after some comments she made had provoked an uproar at one of the sessions during the AGM in Philadelphia. Elaine had said (brave lady!), “I

don’t believe in Darcy as a romantic lover, compared to Austen’s other heroes.” And, she enquired, “Is this heresy?”

The reader may recall that the theme of that 2009 conference was Jane Austen’s Brothers and Sisters in the City of Brotherly Love. The context of Elaine’s provocative remarks was a paper given by Susan Allen Ford entitled, “Exactly what a brother should be? The Failures of Brotherly Love”, which was based on some of her reading of 18th century conduct literature while a Visiting Fellow at Chawton House Library in Hampshire. Dr. Ford says Mr. Darcy is one of a number of brothers in the novels who, while not bad, are troubling and “defined as friendly, affectionate, helpful, and trustworthy, but who fail to provide the fraternal support required.” Then, on the other hand, in her concluding paragraph, Ford says that Darcy’s relationship with his sister may have been a stifling paternal-fraternal authority which almost overcame Georgiana’s affection. And again, in her concluding paragraph, Ford implies that Elizabeth may be in for an unhappy life under Darcy’s domestic tyranny. “What,” Ford asks, “will become of Mrs. Darcy?”

In the discussion at the close of that talk in Philadelphia, Dr. Bander ventured that not only did Darcy have imperfections as a brother, but is inferior to other heroes such as Captain Wentworth, whose constancy makes him her personal favourite. Elaine confessed that, as an eleven year old, she was in love with Heathcliffe, but developed a more mature relationship with Austen who, she says, has a more bracing view of romance than Bronte. She “abandoned” *Pride and Prejudice* to study *Emma*, on which she wrote her thesis. In *Pride and Prejudice*, however, she says Austen traces the psychological and emotional development of Elizabeth and Darcy.

As I see him when he first comes into view, Darcy is a portrait of insufferable churlishness at the height of his puppydom. Which is, perhaps, not surprising, considering that he is a tall, handsome, indulged young man with an income on the scale of a royal prince, vast estates, and aristocratic connections. Then, too, he has come down to this little corner of Hertfordshire from London, where his acquaintances probably lived in the highest fashion, the ladies dressed in the latest style of gorgeous fabrics and even more dazzling jewels. Certainly, Darcy is, as are all Jane Austen's characters (and as we all are), a flawed human being. When given a chance for a second look at Elizabeth at Netherfield, Darcy is smitten, and after a third look at Rosings, he is lost. In his proposal, however, he admits that he is irritated with himself for being unable to overcome his infatuation by enumerating the inferiority of her family connections. By the end of this interview he is puzzled and angry, and Elizabeth is hopping mad. But, it seems to me that comical and ironical as Jane Austen is, she ultimately creates in Darcy her ideal of a superb man, a fitting mate for her beloved fictional daughter Elizabeth, who is beautiful, intelligent, spirited, and poor.

Elaine Bander, though, just doesn't find Darcy's conversion to romantic hero quite believable, while Austen traces the development of his character as revealed by his own actions and explanations, the fond opinion of his housekeeper, and Elizabeth's altered esteem. Again as I see it, he is reflected in the light of her own self-knowledge that she has been taken in by Wickham, surely one of the most plausible and vicious liars in all fiction. Elaine feels that Elizabeth did not originally see Darcy in erotic terms, infatuated as she was by Wickham, but an enduring regard develops, especially after his generous and noble acts in searching out Wickham and Lydia, supplying money and exerting influence to bring about their marriage, and therefore rescuing the whole Bennet family from a scandal which would have tainted them forever.

But to Elaine's question, "Are her doubts heresy?" the Janeites during the discussion period said a resounding "no!" One member said that she had always felt "screened off" from Darcy for his awkward proposal of marriage, and the plot indicates that it is an early novel. In it, the characters have plenty of flaws, and there is plenty of pride and prejudice to go around!

Although I am unfamiliar with conduct literature of the Georgian era, and can quite understand Mary Woolstonecraft's scathing view of the prevailing paternalistic systems, I am at a loss to understand Susan Allen Ford's conclusions about Fitzwilliam Darcy within the context of Jane Austen's creation. Ford has found that much of the conduct literature of the 18th century provides scanty direction to brothers, and what has survived gives an idealistic view of fraternal love, at least from the perspective of male authors. Ford says, "Austen provides us with a good sampling of bad brotherly behaviour." Actually, I think Austen gives us a pretty good cross-section of men, the good, the bad and the ugly, whether brothers or anybody else. What I can't quite see is Ford's linking of a betrayed young innocent like James Morland with a magnate such as Darcy. It is true that he says in his letter to Elizabeth, "Georgiana...almost looked up to me as a father..." And Austen does say, at the very end of the novel, that, "(Darcy who) . . . had always inspired in herself a respect which almost overcame her affection, she now saw as the object of open pleasantries." BUT (I but you many but) I feel the operative words here are "almost overcame", and it is worth taking a closer look at Darcy's sister. Give the tenor of the times, is her view not understandable?

Her big brother is ten years older than her, is her joint guardian, is a magnate rich as Croesus, and has an exploded idea of himself. Georgiana, he tells us in the letter, had been at school until the age of 15, which makes him, incidentally, at least 25. Given the prevailing paternalistic tenor of the times, she must, by that age, have seen girls who were victims of cruelty and neglect from fathers, mothers, step-parents, and others. Ford points out (in Chapman p 122) that Charlotte Lucas' brothers were relieved to have her off their hands. Wickham, who had grown up as a favourite of Georgiana's father, whispered love to her, and a daring scheme. How likely is it that, unless she had trust and faith in her brother, she would have confided in him? If she had been treated harshly, she would have been all too eager to flee, aided by the treacherous Mrs. Younge. She sensed danger, and had the judgment to trust her safety to her brother. Georgiana, shy and protected as she had been, was no amoral dunce like Lydia, and put her faith in a trustworthy man.

On the other hand, many perceive that Darcy is improbable as a lover. Insults are not usually within the lexicon of love making. He has had his limitations forcefully pointed out, and as Dirty Harry says in *Magnum Force*, "A man has GOT to know his limitations." Darcy proves he is capable of maturity, warmth, and humour, and I do not tremble for Elizabeth.

Report by Sandy Lundy

The editor has recently been provided with the text of a review for Phyllis Bottomer's book So Odd a Mixture: Along the Autistic Spectrum in 'Pride and Prejudice'. This appeared in the News Letter of the Jane Austen Society in the UK. The reviewer concluded that Phyllis's "....linking of the characters with the autistic spectrum gives us an opportunity to reflect on them from a fresh perspective that offers very modern insights and yet is completely grounded in Jane Austen's written words."

Which is a reminder that this book provides a detailed study of a number of characters in Pride and Prejudice, including that perplexing fellow, Fitzwilliam Darcy! It is available from Chapters, Amazon and the publisher Jessica Kingsley Ltd.



"Can We Talk?"

by Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson, Unitarian Church of Vancouver

Somewhere, back in the recesses of my memory, I recollect a moment in 1980s pop culture that had this catch phrase: "Can We Talk?" A quick search confirmed my rusty recollection—the comedian Joan Rivers hosted a celebrity show, with "can we talk?" as her entrée into an interview with a "guest." The show must have been something of a flop; it ran for one feeble season and was cancelled. But that phrase came to mind recently, when I read an article in the *Globe and Mail* about the dying art of conversation and a call, by its author, to resuscitate it.

I have always been in awe of people who are good conversationalists: the women and men who know how to tell an entertaining, quietly instructive story concisely without drawing a lot of attention to themselves; people who have a feel for the ebb and flow of talk,

and how, with tact and good timing, they invite the quiet ones in a gathering out of their silence to join in the lively give-and-take of conversation. It's not a skill I possess; I think it's a gift. And yet sometimes, perhaps, all it may take is turning to the person next to you, or a step or two away, and asking: "*And what do **you** think about that?*"

Now for those of you shaking your heads at that piece of alarmingly remedial advice (and chances are the head shakers are women, not men), remember—not everyone is good at or feels comfortable in the interchange that takes place in conversation. I still remember the shock (and delight) I felt reading *Pride and Prejudice* for the first time as a university undergraduate—all that conversation! All that attentiveness to the acute nuance of feelings! It was like being an anthropologist eavesdropping on an exotic, alien tribe.

With others, I wonder (and worry) what's going to happen to conversation in our age of social media, Facebook, texting, and Twitter creep? Will it degrade further until we're sound-biting each other, not taking the time to talk with others, not engaging in face-to-face encounters? Or am I being stodgy? Perhaps conversation is blossoming electronically, and I haven't a clue.

What I do want to say is this: conversation takes time, and it's a bit 'dangerous', but it's worth it. If I ask you: *and what do **you** think about that?* at least three things *could* happen. First, I have to stop the frantic flow of what I am doing long enough to listen to what you have to say (and for someone like me who can at times feel like a March hare, that is a good thing). Second, asking what *you* think de-centers me; it takes me out of the spotlight and invites you into its glow (again, a good thing, I think). And finally, by inviting you into a conversation, I may just learn something I didn't know; you may 'force' me to change my opinions and beliefs about something by virtue of the information you possess, or the novel idea you share. Another name for 'novelty, in this case, is revelation—something heretofore hidden is revealed—and who knows how I will respond to what you have said? Perhaps it, too, will be 'novel', revelatory; and you and I will, by virtue of the back and forth of creative interchange, bring something heretofore unknown into the world. May it be good.

Suggested by Diana Bodnar

Our Meeting Schedule

- April 16** **Jane Austen Day – full day with catered lunch. For reservations, please contact Jennifer before April 8 at 604-263-5612 jenniferbettiol@shaw.ca**
- May 14** **Program TBA**
- June 18** **Program TBA**

This Newsletter, the publication of the Vancouver Region of the Jane Austen Society of North America, is issued periodically. All submissions on the subject of Jane Austen, her life, her works and her times, are welcome.

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