

Muse & Musings

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

June 20th Books & Berries or

Aileen to the Rescue (and cheek!)

This meeting was nearly "Books and No Berries" as nobody brought any. Aileen saved the day by valiantly going out to Stong's at the last minute and buying a selection of berries, washing and hulling them, so all worked out. Then, curiously, while the meeting was in progress, somebody unconnected to our group, entered the kitchen, and unbeknownst to us went around and helped themselves to a complete selection of all the food laid out. Gaps on our platters of food everywhere. Cheek!

Iris Dayson did a bang-up job of running the book sale. However there was only a small selection of books, as many forgot to bring theirs. The sale initially made \$14 but we ran a "50% off final clearance" at the end of the meeting, and the proceeds ended up at \$25. Excess books were donated to the Church.

The book reviews were very interesting and varied, especially Mary Atkins' review using a demo of her kindle, and Bonnie Herron's lively review of her own book. The books reviewed were:

- *The Real Jane Austen*, by Paula Byrne, reviewed by Mary Atkins.
- *The Paris Wife*, by Paula McLain, reviewed by Lorraine Meltzer.
- *My Courage Rises* by Bonnie Herron, reviewed by Bonnie Herron.
- *Northanger Abbey* adapted by Val McDermid, reviewed by Joan Reynolds.
- *Emma* adapted by Alexander McCall Smith, reviewed by Mary Atkins
- *Bitch in the Bonnet* by Robert Rodi (Kindle) reviewed by Mary Atkins.



The **Bountiful Basket** draw was won by Adrienne Savil-Lopez (left, seen in 2012).

– Joan Reynolds

JASNA Vancouver AGM

Motion: Annual dues for JASNA Vancouver be increased to \$30 per person (from \$20) and to \$40 per family (from \$30) effective the financial year starting September 1, 2016.

There was significant discussion around the motion, and about rising expenses, reducing costs etc.

Some thought wine could be dispensed with – but it was explained that the cost is relatively insignificant, and that it is the rent, and Jane Austen Day subsidies that have more of an impact. Some thought the speaker honorarium too high, some thought we shouldn't have one at all. But this wasn't part of the motion so there was no change.

One member asked: Why is there a requirement to join JASNA Canada? The response was: First, it is in the bylaws, and second there are benefits for both individual members and the local region:

- members receive *JASNA News* and *Persuasions*
- members are eligible to attend the AGM
- local region has access to speaker grants
- local region may receive visits from both the JASNA President and JASNA Canada President to our Region at no charge

All of these local region benefits help to keep our speaker costs down. It was also emphasized that JASNA Vancouver does not send any monies or donations to JASNA Canada. My personal impression was that most members see the value of belonging to the parent organization.

One member pointed out that the motion's increase is just over a dollar a meeting so not a lot of money.



Motion carried unanimously!

– Joan Reynolds

Letter to the Editor

Raise a glass to the men of JASNA

Dear Editor,

In Issue 123 of *Muse & Musings*, the Member Profile of Lorraine Meltzer was most enjoyable. I was flattered (if indeed it was intended I should be included) by her concluding remark, "Finally, I thoroughly enjoy spending a morning with a group of women who are interesting and intelligent." But it got me thinking, "What about the men who are Janeites?" The names of such beloved and late lamented teachers as David Selwyn of Bristol, Hugh McKellar of Toronto, and Jack Grey of New York sprang to mind. Maggie Lane began her obituary of David Selwyn with the line "(he)...was a towering figure in the Jane Austen Society and in the wider world of Austen scholarship." Hugh McKellar shared many of his traits, as did Jack Grey, who was the founding President of JASNA in 1979, and Henry Burke of Baltimore was his second vice-president.



Lates: David Selwyn, Hugh McKellar, Jack Grey, Henry Burke

We have lost Brian Southam, author of *Jane Austen and the Navy*, but John Mullan of the University of London is very much with us, and the screen writer Andrew Davies is still extant! But then it struck me (like Virginia Woolf, I give you my thoughts as they came to me) that the creation of JASNA, and its continued existence, was and is the creation of Denis Mason Hurley, who was Joan Austen Leigh's husband.

If one glances through the program for this autumn's AGM at Louisville, at least 12 of the speakers are men. Among them is William Phillips, whose priceless "Sense & Sensibility Doggerels" (presented at the Fort Worth AGM) are reprinted on pages 3 and 4 of our Newsletter #115, April 2012.

And then there are the members of the masculine gender in our local chapter, among them Richard Spencer, Richard Mills, and the great sommelier himself, Ron Sutherland, who was a founding member of the group and whose company is so appreciated.

Perhaps we can raise a glass at our December meeting "To the gentlemen of JASNA. God bless them everyone."

Yours truly, Sandy Lundy

Member Profile:

Aileen Hollifield



1. Tell us a little bit about yourself and your life to-date.

I am originally from Edinburgh Scotland and immigrated to Montreal in 1972. We moved to Vancouver in 1978 after the Parti Quebecois won election in Quebec. I love Vancouver, and my two daughters especially love Vancouver. I have never regretted the move – René Lévesque really did me a favour.

In my career, I was a teacher of hearing impaired students, and taught in Edinburgh, Montreal, and Burnaby. Hearing impaired students have great difficulty with language and hence with reading, but I really enjoyed trying to give them a love of literature and found them very receptive.

2. When did you join JASNA?

I joined JASNA in 2007, after reading an article in a newspaper about the AGM being held in Vancouver

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

I was given a copy of *Emma* as a school prize in Grade 8.

4. What do you like about JASNA?

I enjoy being inspired to read and reread the books and discussing issues with knowledgeable and inspiring members.

5. Has JASNA given you any special memories?

I very much enjoy the sense of community. When I went to Australia to visit my daughter, I simply turned up at a JASA meeting in Sydney and a conference in Melbourne and immediately felt welcomed and at home.



Sidney (top) and Melbourne (above)



Michelle dressed for the Montreal AGM ball

Michelle's missive

Regional Coordinator's message

Thank you to our panelists at the **September meeting**, our first event of the new membership year: Mary Atkins, Phyllis Bottomer, Megan Barker, and Laureen McMahon for providing their insight and analysis into four of the novels' widows: Mrs. Thorpe, Lady Catherine, Mrs. Jennings, and Mrs. Norris. While these characters ranged from Merry to Miserable, the discussion that came out of that panel was merry and thoughtful.

Also in September, we said thank you and to our outgoing Treasurer and Membership officer, Jennifer Bettiol, who has done a brilliant job. She has served our region well as treasurer, and kept a good eye on the books. She's spending more time on her master's degree.

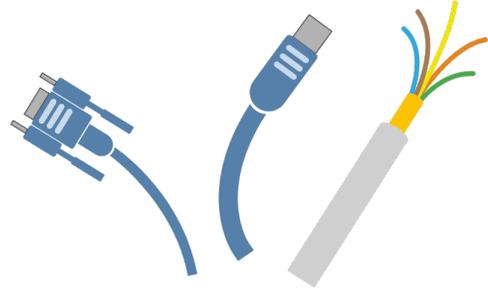
We welcome Elaine Wong, who has agreed to take on the task, and is like Jennifer a CA. She has stepped into the role right away, collecting membership dues (everyone, please remember to submit your membership renewals!) and attended the Louisville AGM in October, including the Regional Coordinators' meeting and business meetings in my stead. A huge thank you to Elaine!

At our **October meeting**, Elaine also shared some of her travels in Louisville, including visiting the Muhammad Ali Centre, a museum to the namesake boxer.

Also at that same meeting, we welcomed Karoline Pasciano, winner of the JASNA essay contest, College/University division, with "Beyond Earthly Appetites: Food, Consumption, and the Construction of Mansfield Park". Karoline is an excellent speaker and we see a bright academic career ahead for this UBC student. Her notes could provide enough for many more essays and food for thought: how enlightening watching each character's food consumption give insight into the character. Or that the mere offer of a gooseberry tart would have flagged opulence and luxury.

Volunteer wanted

We are still looking for an audio setup assistant. As there are already one person volunteering, it would help to have a second set of hands. Please contact myself or Lorraine Meltzer.



Suggestions and feedback from members are welcome. If you cannot find time with me at our meetings, please email me. jasnavancouverRC@gmail.com

– Michelle Siu

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

The Editor acknowledges a great debt of gratitude to Joan Reynolds and Sandy Lundy who saved this issue, which was without its usual sources of help, and of course to our RC Michelle, who came through as always.

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