

Muse & Musings

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

Our Website

Happy 10th Birthday "jasnavancouver.ca"

Anecdotal evidence shows that after "word of mouth" most people find out about our group through the internet. Our website at www.jasnavancouver.ca is reaching its tenth year since inception. Originally developed in support of the highly successful 2007 AGM held in Vancouver, it has proved a wonderful way to inform our members and the general public. In those early days for a JASNA Region to have a website was considered fairly rare, but most Regions now have one and find it an invaluable communication tool.

Lauren McMahon is our hard-working website coordinator, keeping her ear to the ground to provide updates on our forthcoming meetings through the "Program of Events" page, as well as offering a very lively "News and Notes" section that showcases past events, speakers and some great photographs. More



recently copies of our Newsletter have been included on the site, and past issues are available as far back as 2010.

I had asked Lauren about some of the challenges and pleasures of creating and managing our website. Here's what she had to say:

The creation of the JASNA Vancouver website became necessary when Vancouver was asked to host the October 2007 JASNA AGM at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. A site was needed both to share information and allow attendees to register online.

I was, at that time, the staff reporter for The B.C. Catholic, the weekly newspaper published by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver. I asked my colleague, the archdiocesan webmaster Makani Marquis, to provide information on what creating a website would entail after we discussed JASNA's needs. His suggestions, including web design, the cost of creating the site and ongoing maintenance, were approved by the Vancouver AGM committee.

Makani registered our domain (web address) and Peter Vogel, computer technology teacher at Notre Dame Regional Secondary, agreed to host the site for a small annual fee. Once it was up, the website worked very well and has continued to do so. Today, anyone trying to find information on Jane Austen in Vancouver will be directed to www.jasnavancouver.ca. Our site is listed near the top of the browsing information.

Makani created several web pages and I wrote our region's history, meeting information, etc., with editing assistance from Eileen Sutherland and Keiko Parker. Program information is sent to me by the Program Committee when the dates, speakers, and events are arranged and I post this on the site. I take photos at the meetings and if I'm absent, Joan Reynolds and Michelle Siu fill in. I send the photos to Makani with captions for the News and Notes page.

A couple of years ago Sandy Lundy requested that the Newsletters be available on the website. It is great to have past articles and speakers' talks at your fingertips by clicking on the Newsletters page and choosing the right date.

I think our region is well positioned to convey information through the website. Our site, along with the Facebook page and the Newsletter, keeps everyone informed and up-to-date. While the impetus to establish the site was the 2007 AGM, it continues to be a vital way to communicate with our present members and to inform potential members of meetings.

In addition to Vancouver's site there are four other JASNA-Canada websites:

Winnipeg: <http://jasnawpg.wix.com/jasna-winnipeg>

Calgary: <http://www.jasnacalgary.ca>

Montreal: <http://jasna-mtl.weebly.com>

Nova Scotia: <http://janeausteninnovascotia.wordpress.com>

And Puget Sound's website is: <http://www.austenps.com>

Our "overseas" neighbours in Victoria do not have a website but instead run a very lively Facebook page, as do

many other Regions throughout North America, either alone or, as we do, in conjunction with their “official” websites. Facebook is a fast, flexible and cost-effective means for a JASNA Region to share information with the public on upcoming events and gatherings, to show photos of past events, and to alert devotees to the mass of Austen-related articles and merchandise available.



We are all busy people specially at this time of year, but if you do have a quiet minute to yourself over the holidays, do check out our website – or perhaps another Region’s – to read the latest newsletter, find out the date of the next meeting, look at recent photographs or discover the different activities that JASNA is engaged in. You are sure to find something diverting.

– by Joan Reynolds

September 24th Meeting

A Group Discussion Celebrating 200 years of Emma
Mary Atkins led a group discussion on Emma by handing out a sheet of questions to each table, and later asking a representative from each table to summarize the table’s discussion. Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer pointed out that although Jane Austen lulls us from the very beginning into believing that, “Emma Woodhouse, handsome clever and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her,” she is in fact much to be pitied. Her life, according to Phyllis, is that of a bonsai tree: she is cut off at every point. She has never travelled or seen the sea; never been even as far from home as London (only sixteen miles); she cannot leave her father for more than two hours at a time without making extraordinary arrangements for his entertainment and care. It is perhaps her “happy disposition” that is her saving grace.

– by Elspeth Flood

October 15th Meeting

Dr. Herbert Rosengarten presents: **Austen Brontë Connections**

UBC professor emeritus, Dr. Herbert Rosengarten gave a lively discussion entitled “Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë, Sisters Under the Skin,” focussing on *Pride and Prejudice* and *Jane Eyre*. Dr. Rosengarten repeatedly apologized that his subject is Brontë, not Austen, so he kept his focus narrow. Nevertheless he showed considerable mastery over Austen’s works in the course of his discussion.

He suggested (very amusingly) that both *JE* and *P&P* could be reduced to the same template: Wealthy and powerful man meets less wealthy lady, falls in love with her and proposes. Separation and complications – including family secrets – ensue until eventually the two are reunited. I am currently reading is *North and South* by Elizabeth Gaskell, which also fits the template!

Although Brontë famously disparaged Austen’s writing as having no passion, Dr. Rosengarten was able to draw many comparisons between the two authors’ lives and works. They were both the daughters of clergymen living in country parsonages, both were very close to their sisters and both wrote stories and poems starting at a very early age.

Michelle mikes up Dr. Rosengarten



During the lively discussion various members pointed out that Brontë might have found plenty of passion in Austen had she known where and how to look.

– by Elspeth Flood

November 19th Meeting

Writers in Our Midst and AGM roundup

Memorable Moments

from the AGM in Washington DC, October 2016

- Susannah Fullerton’s little son telling a friend “We’ll have to clear away all Mum’s Jane Austen stuff. When the friend asks “Who is Jane Austen?” Her son says “Haven’t you heard of Jane Austen?”
- An English presenter was asked “What do the Brits think of Jane Austen?” She answered “Janeites are enthusiastic – we are more laid back in the UK.”
- We were asked in an elevator what was the collective noun for Janeites and were told that the answer was “An enthusiasm.” This was not altogether a compliment.
- I saw a young blonde woman wearing a yellow plaid suit in homage to *Clueless*.



The first plenary: *Labours Not Her Own: Emma and the Invisible World*, by Bharat Tandon

Dr. Tandon talked about things hidden in plain sight in *Emma*: many references to characters’ inability to see into each other’s hearts; the hidden plot of Jane and Frank’s engagement; the work of servants. Tandon thinks

that a succession of ideas and possibilities crowd around us while we read Emma.

He referred to Pope's *Rape of the Lock* (1712) with Belinda's army of invisible sylphs which help her with her face, hair and outfit. This in turn was influenced by Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* of 1665 and the idea that we live surrounded by the influence of an invisible world. Tandon suggested the main frame of the novel is like a seismograph, with echoing rumbles from off-stage. Many references are implied.

1. Emma's world is made possible by servants. Jane Austen's readers understood servants – we don't. In Chapter One the coachman James is mentioned five times, his daughter Hannah is mentioned twice by name and ten times unnamed.
2. Austen uses linguistic oddities for example (Volume 2, Chapter 6) "parcels were bringing down." Austen creates a special grammatical mood to describe a special invisible moment.
3. Austen's other novels use real places. Highbury is imaginary. The physical centre of the novel is the street scene described in Volume 2, Chapter 9. Tandon thinks that Highbury is like Brigadoon, appearing periodically.



Elspeth Flood and husband Harry Satanove dressed for the AGM Regency Ball. Harry rented his costume from Regency Rentals owned by Lisa Brown, a JASNA member from Rochester, NY, who set up shop in her hotel room.

Breakout session: *Solving the Puzzle of Jane Fairfax* by Gillian Webster, a first-time presenter at an AGM

Jane Fairfax is not mentioned until Chapter 10 and not introduced until Chapter 20. She is largely silent, the anti-heroine who plays a vital role in highlighting Emma's deficiencies. Compare Austen's treatment of Fanny Price and Jane Fairfax, the introverted heroine of *Mansfield Park* and the introverted anti-heroine of *Emma*. Consider Mary Crawford who has many of Emma's characteristics (although there is a hint of amorality about Mary Crawford).

By chapter 20 we know Emma well, the good and the bad. We are swept along by her self-confidence. Austen manipulates us. Jane Fairfax is better than Emma, more patient, polite, superior in accomplishments, less vain, less judgmental. How does Austen do it? We never get inside Jane's head. Her story must never outshine Emma's. Her virtues bring out the worst in Emma.

Goodness is not always loveable. Flawed Emma is more like us. Jane Fairfax's less fortunate life emphasizes Emma's zest for life. Emma is faulty but she lives in the sunshine, unlike her pale reflection, Jane Fairfax.

Closing plenary: *The 1816 Philadelphia Emma: A Forgotten Edition and Its Readers*, by Juliette Wells



Dr. Wells has made a study of the only Jane Austen novel published in the US in Austen's lifetime and the only copy of a Jane Austen novel printed there until 1832/3. Its existence was forgotten. It was mentioned by David Gilson (author of *A Bibliography of Jane Austen*), who found four copies; Juliette Wells has found two more, for a total of six. This makes it rarer than the First Folio and its 235 copies. Wells thinks it unlikely that any more copies will be found.

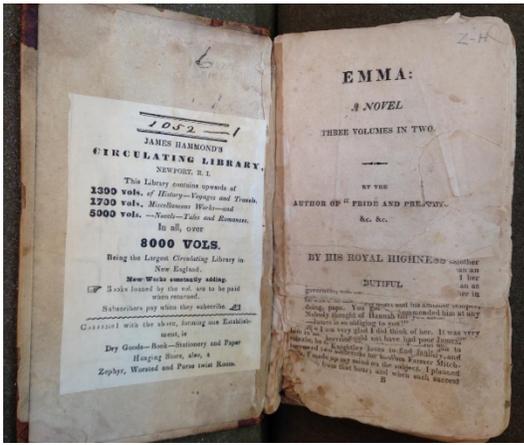
In December 1815 John Murray published *Emma* in three volumes for one guinea (one pound, one shilling). The Philadelphia edition, a reprint with the original three volumes compressed into two, was printed in December 1816, priced at two dollars.

Outside England and Scotland, it was perfectly legal to reprint works without paying copyright. All the materials for the Philadelphia *Emma* were produced in the US: the type, the paper, the ink and the binding. There is no evidence that Jane Austen or John Murray even knew about this edition.

The printer Mathew Carey (born in Dublin in 1760, died in Philadelphia in 1839), was the first of the US printers to become a publisher. (Bibles kept him solvent for decades.) He reprinted many English novels, especially by women authors. *Emma* was sent to him as part of a standing order for new releases. He was perhaps influenced by Sir Walter Scott's review, as he reprinted part of it as a blurb praising the novel.

The greatest cost was the paper, which was hand-made. At first Carey did not send enough paper to the printers, Justice and Cox, in Trenton New Jersey. Cox was probably an apprentice, aged 15. Correspondence showed the need to get the printed pages delivered by water to Philadelphia "before the river closes." No proof-reading was done. Carey had to bind the printed pages: 400 were in boards, 50 were fully bound in leather.

The text was compressed to use less paper and the paper, was of poor quality compared with English paper. The copies that survive are in a dreadful state, with ripped, damaged and skewed pages and bulging bindings.



One copy (shown above) was found in the Circulating Library of Newport, RI, and is in a spectacular state of disrepair. There are interesting pencil annotations:

*I expect Emma is going to marry Mr. Knightley.
I wonder who liked this book?*

One reader made a list of the characters and described each briefly:

<i>Mr. Knightley tolerable</i>	<i>Emma intolerable</i>
<i>Frank Churchill delightful</i>	<i>Jane Fairfax enchanting</i>
<i>Mr. Woodhouse gravity</i>	<i>Mr. Elton a d---d sneak</i>
<i>Miss Bates full of gab</i>	<i>Harriet very pleasant</i>
<i>Mrs. Elton a vulgar woman</i>	

James N. Green a book historian affirms that this reprinted edition cannot be considered piracy.
— *Helen Spencer*

Writers in our midst

Bonnie, Keiko, and Jennifer

Bonnie Herron (see the second Member Profile below) was inspired to write her novel *My Courage Rises* when she vividly imagined her heroine running along the shore of Loch Lomond in Scotland. The book is intended as the first of a trilogy – it leaves the heroine almost in a cliff-hanger. The style and material are not Austenesque, but the heroine is strengthened by quoting Elizabeth Bennet’s “my courage always rises” whenever her author throws more trouble her way. You can buy Bonnie’s book online:

[Buy Bonnie's book](#)

Keiko Parker, who first translated *Emma* into Japanese in 2010 (published in Japan in 2012), followed it with *Persuasion*, published in 2014. Both are her favourite works. Her third translation, *Mansfield Park*, will be published in early 2017. She told us about the many differences between Japanese and English that make translating particularly challenging – for instance she can’t say “sister,” she has to say “younger sister” or “older sister,” which means that if the text doesn’t explicitly state

the relative ages, she has to look at the evidence and make an educated guess.

Keiko also described her process of translating, then comparing texts sentence by sentence, then making corrections, reading the translation alone, then going back to side comparison, ultimately going through the text several times, and generally taking close to a year.

Jennifer Bettiol wrote a continuation of Austen’s unfinished *The Watsons* primarily to amuse herself and to answer the question of “what happens next?” – and also to challenge herself with trying to write like Jane Austen. She told us about her process of searching through online copies of Austen’s works to see whether the words and phrases she uses are ones Jane actually used. (“What would Jane Austen Do?”)

Although she wrote in the first place for herself, she has shared it with many people, and her son set it up for online ebook sales at \$1.00 (with the proceeds to Jennifer’s son):

[Buy Jennifer's book](#)

— *by Elspeth Flood*

Teacher of Distinction

Keiko Parker Honoured by Royal Conservatory



On November 6, Keiko Parker was named the inaugural Teacher of Distinction by the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) at a convocation ceremony at the Chan Centre. The award was presented by RCM President Dr. Peter Simon (left with Keiko). Keiko, to quote the program for the event, “is a much-admired theory teacher who has taught generations of students from a classroom in her Burnaby home. Among her students were internationally acclaimed pianists Jon Kamura Parker and Jamie Parker, who have praised their mother . . . for teaching them everything they know about music theory.”

Two Member Profiles

Azarm Akhavian

1. Tell us a bit about who you are and your life to-date.
I was born in Tehran, Iran in 1965. Raised by a very intellectual father and free-thinking parents, I had a very happy and fulfilling childhood.

Unfortunately the revolution in Iran occurred when I was thirteen years old and everything changed. Because of pressure from the Islamic government, my dad had to retire soon and there was no freedom, especially for women.



It was a very depressing time. I was a very sad teenager who suddenly had to grow, suddenly lost her freedom in reading, listening to music, riding a bicycle or any little joy in life. Many of my friends lost family members to either by government action or later in the Iran – Iraq war.

My parents were very wise and sensible to my feelings. They encouraged me to focus on my education with the hope that I would get out of Iran when I reached the age of 18. However, my attachment to my family, especially to my beloved father, didn't let me leave until in my mid-thirties. During those years, I got my doctorate in clinical lab science, got married, started my family and got a great job. Eventually in 1999 my husband and I made our decision to move to Canada because we wanted to provide the children with freedom and a much happier place.

It was very, very difficult. We left everything behind – our families, our jobs and great friends – but we made it. We first chose to live in Ottawa, and after living eight years in beautiful Ottawa, we moved to Vancouver nine years ago for a job opportunity.

Today, I'm the mother of two successful young men, I work as a clinical lab research coordinator; and most importantly I am able to enjoy reading any book I want to, listen to any music I would like to and do my watercolour painting!

2. When did you join JASNA?

About three years ago. Due to my love for reading, and especially 19th-century literature, I was searching for any related book club or reading society. I found the JASNA website and got in touch with Michelle.

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

My dad was literature professor in a Tehran university and under his supervision and advice I started to read books. I was 11 years old when I started to read Jane Austen books.

4. What do you like about JASNA?

I like the opportunity to learn more about my favourite writer, making friends among a wonderful group of enthusiasts and learn more about British, Canadian and American culture.

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

My favourite time is when a member is reading Jane Austen – I love to listen. JASNA has inspired me so much that, I am interested to apply for 19th-century English literature at UBC. And I got volunteer to be part of the committee!

Editor's note: We are running two member profiles this edition because both Azarm and Bonnie have stepped up to join the Program Committee.

Bonnie Herron

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

I am proudly Canadian, born to parents of Scottish and Irish descent. Following a career in Marketing at IBM Canada Ltd, I returned to university to complete a PhD in English. My research focussed on eighteenth-century women writers, including Jane Austen.

In 1996, while I was still a grad student I was invited to give a paper on Jane Austen's Juvenilia, at the University of Durham in northern England. While I was in the area, I travelled to Scotland, to see the birthplace of my grandparents, near Loch Lomond. I was sitting in a boat, on a tour of the Loch when I first got the idea for my historical fiction novel, *My Courage Rises*. I like to think that without Jane Austen, I would never have been inspired on that day, at that time, to write my story.

2. When did you join JASNA?

While I was a graduate student at the University of Alberta, I joined JASNA, just in time to volunteer at the 1993 Lake Louise AGM! That's the AGM at which Isobel Grundy introduced everyone to Sandy Lerner. The audience was thrilled to hear Sandy describe her plans to establish the Chawton House Library, for early women's writing.

3. What do you like about JASNA?

I enjoy meeting and speaking with like-minded Janeites. I also enjoy AGMs and the wide range of perspectives shared. AGMs are also a great way to travel with the assurance that friends from distant JASNA chapters will meet and tour new cities together.

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

Yes! I was thrilled to participate in an Author's Panel, at the AGM in 2012. I never would have imagined that I would be an author in the company of other authors who love Jane Austen. Subsequently, I enjoyed being a part of Author Signing Events at AGMs in Minneapolis and Montreal.

With regard to other new experiences at JASNA, I began, two years ago, to share my research on women writers who wrote in the time of Jane Austen, with my fellow Janeites in the Victoria, BC chapter of JASNA. I realized that those interesting tidbits about authors such as Frances Burney, or earlier writers such as Lady Mary Wortley Montague would not survive me unless I shared them! I plan to continue gathering and sharing my research notes, next, on Ann Radcliffe and Maria Edgeworth, as I work my way through my files. So far, my fellow JASNA members have enjoyed learning about women who preceded or influenced Jane Austen.



Spring Meeting dates

Mark your Calendars

The Spring 2017 meeting dates are:

February 18 th	March 18 th
April 22 nd	May 27 th
June 17 th	

Please see the program of events on our website:

[JASNA-Vancouver program](#)

Austen-Related Book Excerpt

The Readers of Broken Wheel Recommend
by Katarina Bivald pp. 317-318.

Of course, with books, you could have greater confidence that it would all end well. You worked through the disappointments and the complications, always conscious, deep down, that Elizabeth would get her Mr.

Darcy in the end. With life, you couldn't have the same faith. But sooner or later, she reminded herself, surely someone you could imagine was your Mr. Darcy would turn up.

Though that was assuming you were one of the main characters.

She almost sat up in bed at that startling realisation. Tom stirred next to her, and she forced herself to relax again, but her mind was still thoroughly worked up.

Help me, she thought, don't let me be one of the minor characters.

She could live with not having found her Mr. Darcy yet. In actual fact, she had never expected she would. Once upon a time, she hadn't wanted to be anything other than a minor character. Being the protagonist, that would have been too much to ask, much better to be given the occasional appearance and the kind of character trait that could be described in a couple of sentences whenever she happened to encounter the real heroine. But now...The thought that Tom had been meant to meet someone else all along filled her with sheer horror. Her thoughts naturally drifted to Claire, but she tried to forget the idea.

Imagine if she, Sara, was Caroline Bingley rather than Lizzy Bennet.

Or Mrs. Hurst.

Several Austen-related paragraphs from a Swedish novel that I just read. Rather sweet and certainly full of references for book-lovers.

– Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All

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

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