

The Austen Intelligencer

Jane Austen Society of North America
New York Metropolitan Region

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Juliette Wells

A Word from Our 2009 International Visitor



It is an honor to have been selected by JASNA as this year's International Visitor, and a particular pleasure since our own New York region sponsors the International Visitor Program (IVP). I will be pursuing research at Jane Austen's House Museum (JAHM, better known to many of us as Chawton Cottage) during the month of July. Rather than undertaking traditional forms of archival research, I'll be studying the phenomenon of literary tourism, as part of a book project I'm working on. I am planning to interview and survey visitors to JAHM in order to ascertain what brings them to the house, what they hope to experience while there, and how their presence affects their understanding and appreciation of Austen.

Many of us practice literary tourism, and we tend to take it for granted. I include myself, enthusiastically, in this group: my first visit to Chawton Cottage was in 1997, just after I graduated from college. Yet the desire to visit houses and other sites associated with authors has only recently started to receive attention from literary scholars. Nicola J. Watson's wonderful 2006 book *The Literary Tourist* lays out a history of the journeys and writings of literary tourists in Britain, as well as very thought-provoking theories about the impulses that lead readers to seek connections, through travel, with their favorite authors. I will be interested to see the extent to which the testimonies of today's literary tourists to Chawton bear out, or depart from, Watson's theories. I will incorporate my findings in a book titled *Everybody's Jane: Austen in the Popular Imagination* that I am writing for Continuum.

In addition to meeting and talking with visitors to JAHM, and with its staff, I'm very much looking forward to attending (and, as one of my IVP duties, helping with) the July meeting of the Jane Austen Society. I've enjoyed many a JASNA AGM but haven't yet had the opportunity to take part in a gathering of the U.K. organization. I hope to gain some insights to include in the chapter in my book devoted to the ideas about Austen that are shared—and debated—when Austen fans gather, both in person and online.

The timing of the IVP makes possible my attendance at another Austen event that relates to my research as well. Chawton House Library is sponsoring an international conference, "New Directions in Austen Studies," from July 9-11. A substantial portion of the conference will be devoted to the examination of recent works—film, fiction, and nonfiction—inspired by Austen's writings. I will be chairing one panel of papers on this topic and will also contribute a conference paper titled "New Theoretical Approaches to Austen in Contemporary Popular Culture."

I'm especially appreciative of the IVP grant for two more reasons. First, my college, like many others, has frozen faculty travel funds for this year in order to rein in costs. In financial times like these, it is a great help to scholars to have grants available from organizations such as JASNA. On a more personal level, I'm a mother of two young children: Lucy, who is three, and Eric, who just turned one. My husband, a physics professor at Manhattanville, and I take turns looking after them, which makes for quite a balancing act when we try to factor in our teaching and research. Thanks to the flexibility of JASNA's IVP, we'll all live in Winchester for the month of July. It will be fun to be able to show the kids Jane Austen's house and let them run around the grounds of the Chawton House Library.

When I told Lucy that we'd be spending July in England, her response was, "What is England?" I said, "It's the name of a place." "What does England have in it?" she asked. "England has Jane Austen in it," I told her. I imagine that, in their way, many visitors to Jane Austen's House Museum may think much the same thing.

Juliette Wells

Talking Jane [OR A Thankful Job] Message from our Regional Coordinators

Some jobs are thankless– but being RCs of the New York Metro region of JASNA is not one of them. You are constantly thanking us, for doing our job. We do it out of love for Austen's novels, for love of literature, and for love of those of you who are like-minded. We enjoy meeting potential speakers and entertainers, and we enjoy the results of the program planning. We actually like spending a day hawking Austen at the Brooklyn Book Fair.

We also enjoy hearing from each of you, whether it is to pat us on the back, to suggest a program, or to tell us what can be improved.



One thing we hear all the time is that you like to “talk Jane.” We try to help that process along through book groups that meet on a regular basis. In addition to the Manhattan group that meets about 8 or 9 times a year, a Long Island group meets regularly under the direction of Barbara Hellering and Catherine Nettlesheim, and a new book group is forming in Northern NJ under the direction of Carolyn Epstein. Also, Diane Levine has invited members who live in the Albany area to meet her for tea and conversation. If you don't live near any of the existing groups, feel free to ask us for names near you and start a little group to supplement the regional offerings.

We have included “talk Jane” games in some of the regional meetings. We will continue to think of ways to keep you talking and learning about all things Austen.

We also hear that you want affordable meetings. We try. It is almost impossible to find rental space in Manhattan for less than \$1,000. Even that cost is hard to snag. We know you enjoy the tea and conversation part of the meeting – that runs a minimum of \$20 per person. Whenever possible, we team up with other organizations to keep the costs down. Weekend events, unfortunately, are much more expensive. We use the generous donations from our members (*a very deep thank you*) to pay for postage and other administrative costs. Our region does not charge dues; we are one of the few regions able to fund activities through our members' generosity and a reasonable charge for events.

A THANK YOU AND A WELCOME

A hearty thank you to Marilyn Goldfried for being such a terrific newsletter editor over the last few years. We welcome Jinny Ewald as the new editor with this issue.

Still having fun at it,
Your RCs

Nili and Jerry



BAUBLES, BANGLES & BEADS IN GEORGIAN ENGLAND

Fall JASNA-NY Metro meeting
Saturday September 12, 2009
time and place TBD

"But what shall you have by way of necklace?"

We open our fall season with a meeting devoted to answering Mary Crawford's question.

Our own **Frederica Jaret** will present a richly illustrated slide lecture on jewelry of Georgian England. Frederica, a collector of and expert on antique jewelry, will first describe characteristics distinguishing jewelry of that period. Then she will apply her impressive Austen scholarship to examining specific references to jewelry in Austen's novels and to conjecturing what kinds of jewelry characters such as the Dowager Viscountess Dalrymple might have owned and worn.

Frederica herself will be wearing Georgian jewelry. As a special bonus, she has donated a genuine Georgian ring from her collection for auction at the meeting to benefit JASNA-NY. Don't miss this opportunity to own a piece of jewelry made during Jane Austen's lifetime.

Our customary lavish tea will follow the lecture.

Emma: A Mystery without Murder



Jane Cleland and Peggy Ehrhart

"Jane Austen, Mystery Writer," JASNA-NY's spring meeting on March 28, attracted 105 registrants for tea and talk. Jane K. Cleland, author of the best-selling Josie Prescott Antiques Mystery series, laid out the elements of a good mystery in the first presentation. Peggy Ehrhart, former professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University and author of a "blues" mystery, *Sweet Man Is Gone*, analyzed some of the multiple mysteries in Jane Austen's *Emma*, often described as a "mystery without murder" and frequently classified by the *cognoscenti* as one of the five top mysteries of all time. What follows is my summary of their talks.

Jane Cleland - What Makes a Mystery ?

What is a mystery? It's an enigma. There's often a crime, and we gradually we discover who committed the crime. In many mysteries, the person solving the mystery has no personal interest in the solution, but if he or she does have an interest, it needs to be credible. How does a mystery differ from a thriller? It's suspense vs. surprise. A thriller is filled with suspense. For example, can the protagonist stop something from happening? Suspense can carry on for an entire novel or an entire film (think Hitchcock!). But in a mystery, the crime has often already happened, the sleuths go after the solution, and we wait for the surprise resolution. The mystery may have more human drama than a thriller. "Action" describes a thriller – the thrill of the chase, the amateurs trying to stop the professionals – whereas "revelation" describes the mystery – getting to the solution is often all about the interaction and tension between and among the characters. In a mystery, the characters (rather than the chase) drive the plot. And the human element involves the reader, too: the reader often cares about the characters and becomes intimately involved with their adventures and goals. In a traditional mystery, the reader wants to understand the characters and, ultimately, wants to bring the chaos to order.

Mysteries come in many forms—including hardboiled, *noir*, historical, gothic, vampire, and procedural. We all know the elements of the "traditional" mystery: the murder is offstage; there's no bad language, no sex, no graphic violence; the victim knows the murderer; the sleuth deduces the killer; lots of information is available to the reader (if the reader can find it!); and the characters are realistic. But there's a special type of mystery called a "cozy." The cozy has many of the characteristics of the traditional, but here's what's different: the story's often set in a small town, the sleuth is a woman who has a good friend with whom she can gossip, and you get a well-tied up happy ending. With a cozy you know what you get!

All good mysteries have devices that will mislead: either a "red herring" or the "bandwagon fallacy." The term red herring came about around 1805 – it was a fish that would mislead the hounds in a hunt. The mystery red herring is a narrative element that confuses the reader about an important theme; it causes the reader to misinterpret a key detail or fact. Sometimes a popular version of the truth gets around and sounds so logical that everyone joins in believing it (gets on the bandwagon). But then we find out that logic is faulty.

Jane Cleland observed that the traditional mystery has been with us a long time. In fact, the mystery descends from the old-time storytellers who held our attention with great stories around the fire.

Peggy Ehrhart - Emma as a Mystery

Jane Austen as a mystery writer! All six novels have elements of the mystery that Jane Cleland described. A great example is *Northanger Abbey*, with its clues, trails, reasoning, and solutions. And with *Emma*, we have a classic “cozy.” Instead of “who done it,” think “who loves whom.” We have our woman “sleuth” in Emma Woodhouse, as she goes about “interpreting” clues (though Mr. Knightley has the makings of a much better detective!). Let’s look at a couple of examples:

Emma wants so much for her friend Harriet Smith to make the “right” marriage that she plows ahead to develop Harriet’s relationship with Mr. Elton, never picking up the clues that Mr. Elton might be interested in Emma herself. And when they play charades, Mr. Elton wants Emma’s approval, not Harriet’s. Again, Emma is oblivious to what’s happening. But the careful reader can pick up the clues that Austen has laid out.

Frank Churchill is involved with multiple mystery devices. He repeatedly promises to see his father, Mr. Weston, but cancels time after time. But when Jane Fairfax comes to visit the Bates family, Frank materializes. Frank Churchill is part of a perfect “red herring”: he appears to pursue Emma in order to foil the notion that his real involvement could be with Jane Fairfax. Mr. Knightley has his suspicions about Frank - why does Jane Fairfax spurn Emma’s friendship? And many “clues are hidden in plain sight” that, if we looked closely, would make the reader suspicious about Frank’s involvement with Jane. Jane Austen wrote “fair play mysteries.” That is, all the clues are there for us to discover and to follow, and the red herrings to deceive us, if we can but figure them out.

Emma ends in a traditional mystery way. Frank Churchill’s letter to Mrs. Weston explains it all—the traditional mystery ending of everything made rational and intelligent and wrapped up neatly. The whole community of characters gets involved with the details. And we finally have the right people paired up: Emma and George Knightley, Frank and Jane, and Harriet with Robert Martin. An English “cozy” mystery – just no murder!

Laurie Morison

The J. David Grey Memorial Library

Barbara Hellering maintains and operates JASNA-NY’s J. David Grey Memorial Library, an extensive collection of Jane Austen-related books, audiotapes, videotapes, monographs...and more. The library also contains books by, and about, authors contemporary with Jane Austen. Barbara has most recently acquired the following books for the library:

Cleary, Kristen Maree: *A Jane Austen Miscellany: sisters, suitors, families, friends* 1994

Collins, Irene: *Jane Austen and the Clergy* 1994

Smith, Godfrey: *The English Companion: An Idiosyncratic guide to England and Englishness from A to Z* 1984

4/2/2009

Press Release

Extraordinary new portrait found



Georgiana Darcy (age 15)

The discovery this week of a previously unknown portrait of Georgiana Darcy has rocked the art world. The portrait was found in a mislabeled crate stored in Rosings estate.

The portrait will be auctioned on April 1 at
O Flies in the North Abbey Gallery
1036 Upside Down Crescent

There will be a reception prior to the auction, with music by the RTO, Alexander McCall Smith & Admiral Grey Beard on bassoon.

HISTORY

Georgiana's brother Fitzwilliam Darcy commissioned the painting. He then presented it to his aunt Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Lady Catherine's daughter Anne did not compare well with Georgiana, and Lady Catherine did not wish to be reminded of this. She therefore had the painting crated and mislabeled. She told Mr. Darcy that the painting had been lost.

Rev Collins IV, spokesman for the De Bourgh family, issued the following statement:

esYay! lway ancay earhay ouyay!

atwhay ethay ellhay areway ouya alkingtay aboutway?*

This extraordinary portrait is expected to fetch 100 million pounds.

***Translation of Rev Collins IV statement**

esYay! lway ancay earhay ouyay! = Yes! I can hear you!

atwhay ethay ellhay areway ouya alkingtay aboutway? = What the hell are you talking about?

Auction of Paula Peyraud's Collection



Adam Buck (1759 - 1833). A lady and gentleman looking at a crouching Venus in a landscape. Watercolor and charcoal heightened with wash.

Paula Peyraud (1947-2008) was an avid reader and collector of books, manuscripts, autograph letters, paintings, drawings, and prints. Her collection focused on Samuel Johnson and women writers in Georgian society. She collected so much that she had to add a tower with a book room to her house in Chappaqua, NY.

Ms. Peyraud was an undergraduate at Hollins College in Virginia and then earned a Masters in Library Science at Columbia. She was a reference librarian and head of technical services at Chappaqua Public Library. She spent much of her free time collecting in England and Western Europe.

Bloomsbury Auctions held a preview of some of her treasures on May 5, 2009 and then auctioned the collection the next day. Among the many interesting items at the auction were first editions of all of Austen's novels. S & S went for \$38,000, P & P for \$26,000, Emma for \$9,500, MP for \$7,500, and NA/Persuasion for \$5,500. The auction included Fanny Burney letters, Boswell letters, Johnson letters, and more, but no letters from our favorite writer. It seems that Austen's letters are very rare. It was great fun to be at the auction, but, alas, I didn't buy anything.

Nili May



Thomas Rowlandson (1756 - 1827), *Comforts of Bath: King Bladud's Bath*
Pen and ink and watercolor, on a contemporary mount

Quiz
By Joan Delman

When introducing characters to her readers, Jane Austen generally left a good deal to our imagination. See if you can match JA's descriptions to the gentlemen described: One of these gentlemen is a real person described in a letter, rather than a fictional character.

1. A remarkably fine young man... [with] a glowing, manly, open look.
 2. A young man of an open, pleasant countenance, and frank, unstudied, but feeling and respectful manners.
 3. A manner so frank and so graceful that his person, which was uncommonly handsome, received additional charms from his voice and expression.
 4. He had all the best part of beauty, a fine countenance, a good figure, and very pleasing address.
 5. Good looking and gentlemanlike... [with] a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners.
 6. A very gentlemanlike, good-looking, pleasant young man.
 7. A very good-looking young man; height, air, address, all were unexceptionable, and his countenance had a great deal of ... spirit and liveliness.
 8. Rather tall, [with] a pleasing countenance, a very intelligent and lively eye, and, if not quite handsome, was very near it.
 9. A fine, tall person [with] handsome features [and] noble mien.
 10. A tall, gentleman-like, and very clever man... with reserved manners, which prevented his being generally pleasing.
 11. A gentlemanlike and pleasing young man... not handsome... his manners required intimacy to make them pleasing.
 12. His face was not handsome, [but] his countenance was sensible, and his address was particularly gentlemanlike.
 13. About thirty, not handsome, but in person and address most truly the gentleman.
 14. About thirty, and though not handsome, had an agreeable person.
 15. Though not handsome, [he] had air and countenance.
 16. A heavy young man, with not more than common sense; but... there was nothing disagreeable in his figure or address.
 17. A tall, heavy-looking young man... His air was grave and stately, and his manners were very formal.
 18. A stout young man of middling height... with a plain face and ungraceful form.
- A. Mr. Bingley
 - B. Col. Brandon
 - C. Frank Churchill
 - D. Mr. Collins
 - E. Henry Crawford
 - F. Mr. Darcy
 - G. Mr. Elliot
 - H. Edward Ferrars
 - I. Col. Fitzwilliam
 - J. Mr. John Knightley
 - K. Tom Lefroy
 - L. William Price
 - M. Mr. Rushworth
 - N. John Thorpe
 - O. Henry Tilney
 - P. Capt. Wentworth
 - Q. Mr. Wickham
 - R. Mr. Willoughby

If you are lucky the answers are on a following page.

JASNA'S JUVENILIA: THIS IS NEW YORK

This spring, Juvenilia has been learning what a challenge it is to start up a new organization. Especially in New York! First, you start with a list of everyone's e-mail addresses. (*Who has that list?*) It's quite easy to come up with ideas – we've discussed Darcy over dinner, and curled up with Edward and Elinor and a bunch of snacks. But people are busy. Given a choice of venue, day, time, or activity, it still might turn out that lots of people want to, but no one can make it. That's New York for you. We are pressing on and hoping to tempt more young Janeites to join us in time.

Juvenilia has both big and small plans in mind. (*Is that list up to date?*) We're working on a Regency-specific tour of the Met Museum's period rooms, as well as a walking tour of period architecture in New York. We hope this summer to make it out to Historic Richmond Town in Staten Island. All ideas are welcome.

Also, this summer we're going to arrange a make-up movie day. (*Turns out that list? – not so accurate after all!*) But we're on Constant Contact now, and just when it's getting hot we will cool off with somebody's air con and the Tamil Sense and Sensibility musical. Oh, and of course – snacks!

If you are 45 or under, and any of these activities sounds enticing, please join us!

Contact Jennifer at wheresmytoast@yahoo.com or Kari at kari@bartokweb.com.

Jennifer Keenan

JASNA-NY Monthly Book Group

The New York Metro region has an active book group that meets monthly on the third Thursday of each month in members' homes. We have been meeting for 20 plus years and have yet to run out of things to talk about. People ask us, "there are only six books, what do you talk about?" We discuss the characters, the biographies, unfinished books, the juvenilia, and other contemporary authors. The participants suggest topics. Come join us—send Mary Ann Linahan your email address at mllinahan@aol.com, or call her at 718-896-2469, so that she can notify you of future meetings.

The meetings scheduled this summer are:

July 16 "Things we would like to change in Jane Austen"

August 20 Read a book by Georgette Heyer - recommend *The Grand Sophy* but can do *Black Sheep* or others. Readily available. Amazon has them and another source is Heyer, Georgette at Dusty Books, extensive and cheap. She is fun, clever and truly accurate as to the Georgian times.

For further information, please contact Book Group Discussion Leader Barbara Helling at 631-727-8666 or helling@aol.com

Brooklyn Book Festival – Sunday, September 13th, 2009



- 2nd year for JasnaNY to be represented
- Come (in costume) to help us do outreach (also, to enjoy the Fair)
- Sell Pug's merchandise and promote JASNA
- Rain or shine
- Please volunteer - send a note to jasnany@yahoo.com or call 212-666-9170

The Festival is a wonderful chance for us to reach out to prospective members and acquaint them with our favorite author. According to the Festival's website, twenty thousand people attended the event last year.

Take a look at their website to see some of the authors that will be speaking.

www.brooklynbookfestival.org

Jane Austen in Northern New Jersey

With the help of PBS specials devoted to Jane Austen as well as the popularity of Anne Hathaway in "Becoming Jane," Jane Austen's canon has arrived in Northern New Jersey. Over a period of about a year and a half I was invited to speak at local libraries to expand on people's renewed interest in her life and work. The high interest in Jane Austen was reflected in a high turnout at each session.

At the Jefferson Memorial Library in Sussex County I was asked to focus on her life and times and how her works reflected her society. At the Mahwah Township Library in my town I have run three programs. The first was devoted to Emma. Two book discussion groups had read the book and invited me in to lead their meetings. The timing was perfect for me, having just taught the book to my college English class.

The Outreach librarian and I followed up with an evening entitled "Jane Austen at the Movies." I chose the scene from Pride and Prejudice where Darcy and Elizabeth first meet, and he tells Bingley that Elizabeth is not pretty enough for him to invite to dance. We then watched this particular scene in four different film versions (including one from India!).

The next session, "A Jane Austen Christmas," drew a crowd despite a cold winter evening. At the close of this evening I suggested that some people might like to start up a Bergen County Jane Austen Book Club. The rest is history. Our Book Club is up and running. We're currently reading Sense and Sensibility with plans for Emma this summer. Our long term plans are to move our Book Club to the library and, as we expand our topics, bring in the general public. Readers and JASNA members who reside in Bergen County are invited to contact me for more information. Email: carolynepstein@optonline.net. Tel: 201-785-0030

Carolyn Epstein



We are saddened to report the passing of Joan Drexler of JASNA's District of Columbia Region, sister of our member, Helen Dickerman. Both Joan and Helen were active members of JASNA from its earliest years.

ANSWERS: to the Quiz

1 (P); 2 (L); 3 (R); 4 (Q); 5 (A); 6 (K); 7 (C); 8 (O); 9 (F); 10 (J); 11 (H) ; 12 (B) ; 13 (I); 14 (G) ; 15 (E); 16 (M) ; 17 (D); 18 (N)

1. A remarkably fine young man... [with] a glowing, manly, open look. → Capt. Wentworth
2. A young man of an open, pleasant countenance, and frank, unstudied, but feeling and respectful manners. → William Price
3. A manner so frank and so graceful that his person, which was uncommonly handsome, received additional charms from his voice and expression. → Mr. Willoughby
4. He had all the best part of beauty, a fine countenance, a good figure, and very pleasing address. → Mr. Wickham
5. Good looking and gentlemanlike... [with] a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners. → Mr. Bingley
6. A very gentlemanlike, good-looking, pleasant young man. → Tom Lefroy
7. A very good looking young man; height, air, address, all were unexceptionable, and his countenance had a great deal of ... spirit and liveliness. → Frank Churchill
8. Rather tall, [with] a pleasing countenance, a very intelligent and lively eye, and, if not quite handsome, was very near it. → Henry Tilney
9. A fine, tall person [with] handsome features [and] noble mien. → Mr. Darcy
10. A tall, gentleman-like, and very clever man... with reserved manners which prevented his being generally pleasing. → Mr. John Knightley
11. A gentlemanlike and pleasing young man... not handsome... his manners required intimacy to make them pleasing. → Edward Ferrars
12. His face was not handsome, [but] his countenance was sensible, and his address was particularly gentlemanlike. → Col. Brandon
13. About thirty, not handsome, but in person and address most truly the gentleman. → Col. Fitzwilliam
14. About thirty, and though not handsome, had an agreeable person. → Mr. Elliot
15. Though not handsome, [he] had air and countenance. → Henry Crawford
16. A heavy young man, with not more than common sense; but... there was nothing disagreeable in his figure or address. → Mr. Rushworth
17. A tall, heavy-looking young man... His air was grave and stately, and his manners were very formal. → Mr. Collins
18. A stout young man of middling height... with a plain face and ungraceful form. → John Thorpe

Date	Events
Saturday June 27 th	Box Hill Picnic at the Bronx Botanical Garden
Thursday July 16 th	Monthly Discussion Group
Thursday August 20 th	Monthly Discussion Group
Saturday September 12 th	Baubles, Bangles & Beads Fall Regional Meeting
Sunday September 13 th	Brooklyn Book Fair

Don't forget to visit our region's website www.jasnaNY.org
and JASNA's national website www.jasna.org
to stay informed about local and national Jane Austen happenings and news.

*Thanks to **JASNA-NY's** wonderful volunteers – too numerous to mention! –
for all their help in the last few months.*

The Regional Coordinators and the Editors sincerely thank all the people who contributed to the writing, production, and distribution of this newsletter and to the vitality of the region.

JASNA - GREATER NEW YORK CHAPTER

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