

## Spring Regional Meeting

Daily Practice,  
Musical Accomplishment,  
and the Example of Jane Austen

On Saturday, April 23, over 80 members of JASNA NY Metro ignored a rainy day and gathered at Columbia University's Faculty House for our spring meeting. It began with introductory remarks by Regional Co-Coordinator Linda Dennery and a challenging musical quiz, written by Joyce Melito.



Kathryn Libin

Former RC, Nili Olay, introduced our speaker, Kathryn Libin. Dr. Libin is Associate Professor of Music and Co-Chair of Music at Vasar College. She specializes in music of the late 18th and early 19th century, particularly Mozart. She has given many presentations at JASNA AGMs, and served as musical director for JASNA's 25th anniversary meeting in England in 2003. She is also serving as musical director for our 2012 AGM in Brooklyn.

In her talk, "Daily Practice, Musical Accomplishment and the Example of Jane Austen," Dr. Libin first examined the role played by the study of music in the lives of women during the Georgian era. She then specifically addressed what she learned from her study of surviving music notebooks and sheet music collections that belonged to Austen family members and friends. She particularly delighted her audience by playing recordings of songs from the period and illustrating many of her points with citations from the novels.

In good families, little girls of 7 or 8 were encouraged to learn, practice and then perform music for their family and friends. Piano, harp and guitar were the preferred instruments. Practice was seen as promoting discipline, copying music by hand improved penmanship and displayed learning, and performing encouraged poise and confidence. Shyness or re-

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fusal to play was considered a more egregious sin than showing off and playing too much.

But this custom aroused some controversy. While Dr. James Fordyce (whose *Sermons Mr. Collins* tried to read to the Bennet girls in *Pride and Prejudice*) saw music as an innocent amusement, Hannah More, in *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, warned that too much proficiency could cause a woman's life to resemble that of an actress, practicing in the morning and entertaining her guests in the evening. Men, said Miss More, wanted their wives to be companions, not performers. The novelist Maria Edgeworth, in *Practical Education*, warned that accomplishment in music didn't make women more marriageable (as Mary Bennet demonstrates).



Some warned of even greater dangers: music might unleash a woman's passions or serve as a narcotic, dulling other faculties of the mind. Dr. Libin suggested that Mary Crawford is an example of the first sort, Marianne Dashwood a victim of the second type. She is so taken with romantic music that she cannot see Willoughby for what he is, a deceiver.

Even if they could afford sheet music most women also copied out works by hand, a time consuming but rewarding practice. Turning to her examination of the family music books, Dr. Libin noted the different sorts of music found in the books of Jane Austen and

her wealthier sister-in-law, Elizabeth Austen Knight (née Brydges). Elizabeth's books contained opera, Italian compositions, songs from plays, even a piece from Mozart's *Magic Flute*.



The nine music books belonging to Jane that are in the Chawton House Library are filled with compositions less elevated and also more eclectic than Elizabeth's -- English songs, Irish melodies, waltzes, country dances, drinking songs, and, surprisingly, only one hymn. Dr. Libin pointed out that this class difference between the sisters-in-law finds a parallel in the novels. In *Emma*, Jane Fairfax plays some pieces found in Jane's books, while in *Pride and Prejudice* Caroline Bingley and her sister play music that would have been familiar to Elizabeth.



## THE WATSONS AUCTION

According to her niece, Caroline Austen, Jane practiced the piano every morning before breakfast, but she never played in company. We then heard a recording of “The Soldier’s Adieu,” from one of her books. However, she had changed the lyrics to “The Sailor’s Adieu,” much more appropriate with two sailor brothers!

Dr. Libin suggested that Eliza de Feuillide, Jane’s cousin and later her sister-in-law, was probably the most musically accomplished of the Austen ladies. She also noted that the music books of Mrs. Cassandra Austen Leigh, Jane’s mother, exhibit a much neater handwriting than her daughter’s.

Our speaker went on to point out that, in the novels, how a character reacts to music is often an indication of personality. Marianne Dashwood, Jane Fairfax and Mary Crawford are all accomplished musicians. Emma Woodhouse and Elizabeth Bennet play, but both fail to practice enough to be truly proficient. Mrs. Elton, though claiming to love music, predicts she will give up her practicing when her wifely duties demand more of her time.

Following a question and answer period with Dr. Libin, we adjourned to socialize and enjoy sandwiches, desserts and fruit. We toasted the upcoming royal wedding with wine provided by JASNA member Leonard Cox. While the day may have started out rainy and dreary, it certainly ended on a high note (pun intended)!

Joyce Melito

“£800,000.. 830.. 850.. Last chance. No regrets?” Bang! The auctioneer signaled the end and the large crowd burst into applause. I jumped up and made for the exit, eager to email the news to my JASNA friends.

The setting was Sotheby’s London branch this past July 14th, and my husband and I had just witnessed the sale of *The Watsons*, Jane Austen’s early, unfinished novel. Believed to be her last major work in private hands, it had been estimated to sell for between £200,000 and £300,000. When all the auction house fees and commissions were added on, the final price was over £993,250 (\$1.6 million).

That is the current monetary value, but its value to scholars and admirers can’t be assigned a number. Unlike the “fair copy” of *Lady Susan in the Morgan Library*, the manuscript of *The Watsons* shows a work in progress, and it is fascinating to see all the deletions and insertions. There on the page we can see Austen writing and revising, choosing her words with care. Thinking of the recent controversy about Austen’s work needing polishing, you can see here that she was her own editor.

Some JASNA members in the New York area had a chance to see the manuscript in June when it was at the Sotheby’s branch here.

There had been concern before the auction that the new owner might be a private individual who would store the manuscript in a vault. Fortunately, the winning bid was from the Bodleian Library at Oxford and they have promised that *The Watsons* will be on public view this autumn. Given that several Austen relatives were associated with colleges of the University, it is a fitting destination for her work.

Meg Levin



## DEFENSE OF THE REALM: THE MILITARY IN THE AGE OF JANE AUSTEN

It felt like entering another world for the sixty members and guests of JASNA-NY Metro arriving Friday, March 18 for a weekend conference at West Point. Our venue, the baronial Thayer Hotel on the grounds of the Military Academy, communicates the sense of a rich past. We Janeites felt right at home.

Tea and cookies welcomed us as we registered, and Pug's Boutique, staffed by Kerri Spennicchia and Irene Jankowski, was open for business. Appropriately, the raffle baskets had a nautical theme. Many of us had dinner in the Douglas MacArthur Restaurant where Allie Bruce, Doris Master and June Shapiro chaired tables that welcomed new members.

That evening the conference was officially opened by our Regional Coordinators Linda Dennerly and Meg Levin. It was noted that the Military Academy was founded in 1802. It would have reminded Jane Austen of the Royal Naval Academy at Portsmouth where her two youngest broth-

ers, Frank and Charles, began their naval careers.

Program chair Joyce Melito introduced our first speaker, Lt. Colonel Sherman Fleek, US Army (retired) and currently command historian at West Point. The author of several books, Col. Fleek established his "Austen cred" by telling us that he had read four of the novels and seen many of the film adaptations. But it was the following remark that really won us: "Lydia and Kitty would have loved West Point!"

The Colonel's first talk was on the British military establishment during the era of Jane Austen. Though war is scarcely mentioned in her novels, she lived much of her life under its cloud. During the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815) there was the constant threat of invasion. Her brother Henry served for a number of years in the Oxfordshire Militia, and her two brothers saw plenty of action as captains in the Royal Navy. The British Empire was so vast and there were so many theaters of battle that Col Fleek said it was "truly the first world war in scope."

Our speaker gave us a brief but clear introduction to the composition of the army, its weapons and tactics, its cruelties. He did not gloss over the suffering of the soldiers. Surprisingly, there were more deaths from natural causes (infections, contagious diseases) than from actual wounds. The Colonel proved to be an energetic and engaging speaker, peppering us with questions and bringing his topic to life.

The first talk on Saturday addressed the little studied War of 1812. Colonel Fleek explained that this conflict was yet another aspect of the Napoleonic War, since the US traded with France. The British responded by impounding American ships that carried goods to France and impressing U.S. sailors into the Royal Navy. In his talk the Colonel made use of wonderful paintings, drawings and period maps, particularly of the Battle of New Orleans.



Our next speaker was Rear Admiral Joseph F. Callo, Naval Reserve (retired) who has written extensively about Horatio Nelson, the naval hero of the Napoleonic Wars. Tailoring his speech to his audience, he talked of the “astonishing im-



pact Admiral Nelson had on the Georgian era” and how “he changed the course of history from his quarterdecks.” Although best known for his defiance of his superiors, his courage in battle, and his affair with Lady Emma Hamilton, Nelson was also a superlative commander of men. He trusted his captains, gave them authority to carry out his plans, inspired them to achieve what they thought was beyond them, and, should they fail, he stood behind them. Our speaker summed him up as “Superman with Everyman’s weaknesses.”

After a sumptuous buffet lunch nearly everyone went on a tour of the grounds. Our guide pointed out the strategic importance of West Point as we stood looking over the Hudson. We visited memorials and statues all along the hilly campus, and were treated to stories both amusing and inspiring about famous cadets.

Back to the hotel in time for a dance lesson taught by Beverly Francis, a JASNA member and well known as a caller of English country dances at many events, including AGMs. Afterwards, a number of elegant ladies and even a couple of gentlemen in scarlet coats paraded through the lobby a few times before entering the ballroom for the delicious buffet dinner. Lisa Brown, Syracuse RC, provided the room’s British military-themed decorations.

After dinner, the three Flying Romanos played as Beverly Francis led us through many dances of the period. Later in the evening Barbara Hellering led a discussion group called Jane and Jammies in the hotel lobby. The topic was outrageous propositions, “what ifs,” such as: What if Wickham had gone to India? What if Lady Bertram were a witch and Pug her familiar animal spirit? These prompted lively and enjoyable speculation.

Sunday morning everyone attended Adm. Callo’s last talk, on Frances Nisbet, Admiral Nelson’s wife. Born on the Caribbean island of Nevis, Frances was a widow with a young son when she met young Captain Nelson. He was particularly taken with the boy and this may be what prompted her to accept his proposal. They never had children, which Adm. Callo suggested might have contributed to the breakdown of their marriage.



A final lavish buffet, and the conference was over. It had been a memorable weekend, affording us a chance to catch up with old friends and make new ones. Thanks to all who contributed to making it a success.

*Based on reports contributed by Allison Bruce, Barbara Hellering, Meg Levin, Maureen O’Connor and Linda Pedro*

# Austen Chronicle

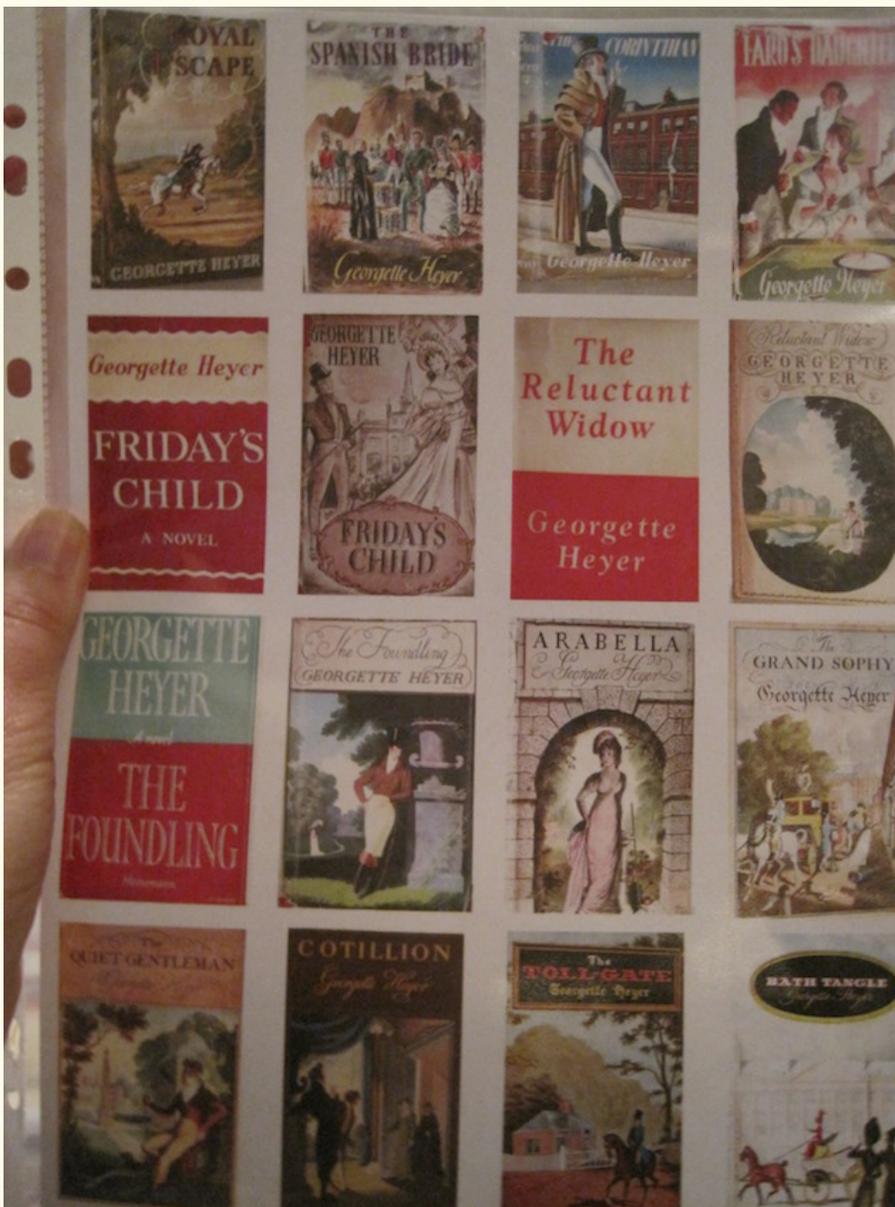
NY Metro Edition

## A TALK ABOUT JANE AUSTEN AND GEORGETTE HEYER

Over 60 JASNA NY Metro members and guests came to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church on June 27, a beautiful Monday evening, to hear Dr. Jennifer Kloester's talk, "Witty Women: Jane Austen's Influence on Georgette Heyer's Regency Novels." For those unfamiliar with Heyer (1902-1974) she was a best-selling English author of dozens of novels, nearly all still in print. Most were historical fiction set in different eras, but it is her Regency romances for which she is

best known. Readers treasure her humor, her engaging plots, and especially all the convincing period details of setting, fashion and slang.

We could not have had a more suitable speaker, since Dr. Kloester's 2004 doctoral thesis, at the University of Melbourne, was on Heyer, the Regency novel and history in fiction. She has written and lectured extensively about these topics, and is the author of two books – *Georgette Heyer's Regency World* (a guide to the Regency period) and *Georgette Heyer: Biography of a Bestseller*, to be published in the U.K. in October 2011.



Dr. Kloester began her talk by telling us how she had first run across Heyer novels in Papua, New Guinea, and reread them while living in Bahrain. Her curiosity grew and she wanted to know more about this accomplished writer. So began a search that took Kloester eleven years as she traveled literally around the world. Heyer was a very private woman whose personal life was unknown, even after her death. Fortunately, Heyer's son and family, as well as Jane Aiken Hodge – an earlier biographer of Heyer – were very helpful and generous. She was given free and open access to all of Heyer's papers, journals and notebooks, as well as access to the University of Tulsa's collection of Heyer's 40 years of correspondence with her publishers.

Kloester pointed out to us that Heyer grew up in England at a time that in many ways was not so different from that of Austen. She was a girl in the Edwardian era when horses and carriages were still in everyday use, inns with stables were still needed, and large mansions still required armies

of servants, complete with their own hierarchies. The “Season” in London, coming out balls and many other traditions going back over a century were still very much alive. Kloester sees Austen and Heyer as in a similar situation, writing about everyday life. Even though much of that life was on the wane by the 20th century, enough remained, and Heyer chose, as her model, one of England’s finest writers in order to perpetuate her world.

Of course, Heyer did not rely only on her own experience. Like Jane Austen, Heyer grew up around books and had the benefit of her father’s library. A voracious reader, she also developed a love of writing. She wrote contemporary novels and murder mysteries. However, when she turned to the Regency, she found that very few books had yet been written about that period. Much of her information came from first hand sources such as memoirs and published letters. (Judging from what our speaker told us, it sounded as if Heyer could have earned a Ph.D. herself.) She did an immense amount of research, keeping meticulous journals and scrapbooks filled with period illustrations and her own drawings.

Her delighted reading and rereading of Austen, her favorite author, is clear, says Kloester. “She was a great admirer of Jane Austen and always acknowledged her favorite author’s influence on her writing. A close reading of Heyer’s novels reveals many moments where she pays homage to her literary idol through her use of Austen-esque humor, witty dialogue, town and country settings. Characters and personalities frequently show them to be descendants of some of Austen’s greatest creations.” While Heyer always acknowledged the superiority of Austen’s works, she was able to take inspiration from her famous predecessor in terms of situations, conversations or language to offer her readers her own version of the comedy of manners. Her success, like Austen’s, lay in her elegant prose, clever plots, comic irony and ability to make her readers laugh.

Our speaker noted strong parallels between some of Austen’s novels and Heyer’s. For example, *Black Sheep* and *Frederica* resemble *Sense and Sensibility*, while *Sylvester* and *Quiet Gentleman* are more like *Pride and Prejudice*. Austen’s other four novels have one “close relation” apiece: *Emma* (*The Foundling*), *Northanger Abbey* (*Reluctant Widow*), *Mansfield Park* (*Cotillion*) and *Persuasion* (*Sprig Muslin*). Heyer also wrote a short story, “Old Maid,” whose plot is very similar to that of *Persuasion*.



Jane Axelrod and Dr. Kloester

Dr. Kloester’s obvious enthusiasm for Georgette Heyer was quite infectious. I suspect that any of us who had not read her novels probably made mental notes to sample her work soon. The talk was complemented by slides showing Heyer among friends and family, selections from her research notebooks and – particularly delightful to the ardent fans among us – colorful reproductions of the original covers of her novels.

A lively question and answer session followed the lecture, and the enjoyment continued as Dr. Kloester graciously stayed to chat with some of the guests.

Jane Axelrod

## “BANISHED CHILDREN”: JANE AUSTEN AND THE VILLAGE WET NURSE

“Who has not seen these banished children, when brought and put into the arms of their mother, screaming to get from them and stretching out their little hands to get back into the arms of the nurse?” William Cobbett, *Advice to Young Men*, 1829.<sup>1</sup>

Jane Austen was the consummate professional writer. She knew when to end her stories: just after a wedding, with a few tantalizing references to a low phaeton and ponies or a very pretty landaulette. Messy details of pregnancy and childrearing were not what nineteenth-century readers wanted.

I suspect Austen would be appalled at modern readers’ fascination with her characters’ sexuality and marital practices, but she could not have foreseen how women’s lives have changed in two hundred years. Today, we want those messy details, and we extrapolate from Austen’s own early life to find them. We may not be surprised at the fact that Jane’s mother employed a wet nurse to breastfeed her children, but I think many of us are astonished to learn, as I was, that this nurse was not a member of the household and instead lived in her own cottage in the nearby village.<sup>2</sup>

We tend to think of a wet nurse as a last resort. In the days before bottles, rubber nipples and formula, if a mother died in childbirth, or if she was sick or physically unable to nurse, a wet nurse was the only option. In fact, by Austen’s time, use of the wet nurse was customary for upper- and middle-class women. As histories of human sexuality explain, in Western Europe the practice began in the Renaissance, and at the very top of society, with the king’s mistress.<sup>3</sup> Not only did she need to keep her

youthful figure in order to keep her job, but also there was a taboo against sexual intercourse while a woman was breastfeeding. The custom soon caught on with the court nobility and spread downward until, by the seventeenth century, most women above the level of working class hired a wet nurse. The practice was so widespread that some physicians were aware of the bad effects, physiological and emotional, on both mother and child, and encouraged women to nurse their own children, to little effect.<sup>4</sup>

The first chapter of Claire Tomalin’s biography is a revelation, describing the “banishment” that the infant Jane and the other young members of her society endured. An infant was handed over to the wet nurse, usually a married woman who lived in the village, perhaps farther away, and stayed with this foster family, probably for about eighteen months. The mother might visit her child daily, not at all, or anything in between, depending on the physical—and emotional—distance. When the child was ready to be weaned it was brought back to its mother, and the only maternal bond it had known was severed—brutally, by the standards of modern psychology.



As Tomalin points out, “bonding between mother and child is a largely modern concept, and ba-

bies were handed about freely” (p. 7) Mrs. Austen was actually a more devoted mother than most: she nursed all her children herself for the first months—three in the case of Cassandra—before handing them over to the village nurse. That this would lead to two traumatic separations for the child, from mother to nurse, and then back again a year or more later, would not have occurred to her, or to most people, as a problem. Mrs. Austen felt she was doing a good thing for her children, giving them a good start in life, and their relative good health and

longevity certainly seems to support her view. Tomalin also reminds us of the obvious: in the days before indoor plumbing and running water, when doing the laundry was a horrendous ordeal for the female members of the household, an infant could push things to the breaking point. Readers interested in Austen’s financial situation will recall that even from her meager allowance of 50 pounds for 1807 she spent 8 pounds on laundry (p. 207). Married women who could afford it would naturally prefer to pay the village wet nurse, not only to feed their children, but to deal with the unpleasantness that emerged at the other end.

Interestingly, it appears that women were aware of the contraceptive effects of breastfeeding, yet continued to employ a wet nurse.<sup>5</sup> While high rates of infant mortality meant that some women wanted large families, hoping that a few would survive, we read of many others, such as Austen’s sisters-in-law, who had healthy broods and dreaded each new pregnancy. Speaking as a modern woman who, even with modern washers and dryers, greets each laundry day with fear and loathing, I can only say that given the choice between easier laundry or maternal bonding, I’ll take the wet nurse every time.

JASNA member Ann Herendeen is a published novelist. Visit [www.annherendeen.com](http://www.annherendeen.com).

1. Quoted in Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen: A Life*, (New York, A.A. Knopf, 1998), p. 7.
2. Tomalin, p. 7.
- (All page citations above are to Tomalin.)
3. For example, Joann Ellison Rodgers, *Sex: A Natural History* (New York: W.H. Freeman, 2002).
4. “The Culture and Biology of Breastfeeding: An Historical Review of Western Europe,” in *Breastfeeding: Biocultural Perspectives*, Patricia Stuart-Macadam and Katherine A. Dettwyler, editors (New York, A. de Gruyter, 1995), p. 101-126.
5. Fildes, p. 105.



James Gillray (1756-1815)  
*The Fashionable Mamma, —or— The Convenience of Modern Dress*  
 Etching with engraving and roulette, hand-colored  
 London: Published by Hannah Humphrey, February 15, 1796  
 NYPL, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, Print Collection

"Fashionable" nursing is satirized here along with the revealing dress of the 1790s (exaggerated for effect). James Gillray portrays an aristocratic woman feeding her goggle-eyed spawn while the coach waits to carry her to more diverting occupations. The peasant in the painting on the wall shows the sentimental side of maternity, and comments ironically on the fashionable mamma's lack of affection.

## ???? RESULTS OF THE SURVEY ?????

“...[I]t was very generally proposed as a most proper attention”...that the Winter Survey Results would be shared. “There was not a dissentient voice on the subject, either when Mrs. Perry drank tea with Mrs. and Miss Bates, or when Mrs. and Miss Bates returned the visit.”

Emma, Vol. I, Chapter 2

Following the example of our predecessors, we surveyed our members earlier this year, asking for opinions and requests.

As with all surveys, the numbers tell the story:

First, we were beyond anything pleased by the responsiveness of our members.

Second, we want to thank each and every one of you for your support, especially those who shared ideas for improvement.

Third, we trust you'll find we've listened well.

101 members responded to the JASNA NY Metro Winter Survey or chose to attend one of the focus groups held in the early months of 2011.

88% Are very satisfied with their experience as a JASNA NY member.

- Our goal is to make that 100%!

88% Rely on our emails – especially for late breaking news about local events of interest, but also for information about Austen related movies, books, materials, museum shows and other happenings in the region, and beyond!

- We remain devoted to all members and wouldn't want a single one of you to miss out on anything Jane! So, members who don't have access to e-mail or prefer other forms of communication can now be matched with a JASNA Telephone Buddy who will alert them to last minute events of interest. Please be sure to let us know if you're willing to be a Telephone Buddy or need one!

79% Thoroughly enjoy our Regional Newsletter, especially announcements of upcoming meetings, reports on past meetings and features by or about our talented members.

- Continue to check your mailbox for our Regional Newsletter – still delivered via snail mail upon request and without additional charge – three times a year.

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## ?? SURVEY CONTINUED ??

72% Think the Monthly Book Group could comfortably include discussion of authors other than “our Jane” and added an idea or two of their own, including a name change.

- Now officially known as the “Monthly Discussion Group”, those interested will continue to meet at 7 PM on the third Thursday of the months in which no other JASNA NY events such as Regional Meetings are scheduled.
- Co-Chairs Barbara Helling and Mary Ann Linahan will continue to plan and coordinate these sessions. Please share your suggestions with them! (Mary Ann: 718-896-2469, [m linahan@aol.com](mailto:m linahan@aol.com); Barbara: 631-727-8666, [helling@aol.com](mailto:helling@aol.com).)
- All JASNA NY members are welcome to receive an electronic version of the reading material – always a pleasure to read even if you can’t attend the meeting! Please notify Mary Ann Linahan if you want to be on the e-mail list for Discussion Group Announcements and Reading Materials.
- We will expand our horizons with an occasional discussion featuring “comparative authors” – and, yes, yes, we agree; not one is a patch on “our Jane”!
- Satellite Discussion Groups can certainly be established on different dates and times outside Manhattan if there’s sufficient interest in attending and – dare we say – reliable – volunteers to host and lead discussion. If you’d like to host or lead such a group as a pilot project, please contact Linda Dennery and Meg Levin at [jasnany@yahoo.com](mailto:jasnany@yahoo.com).
- Starting in January 2012, as a courtesy to those hosting, we will ask those planning to attend the Monthly Discussion Group to RSVP. It really helps to know whether you are expecting eight or twenty-eight guests.

Meeting venues in Manhattan continue to enjoy overwhelming support.

Very strong support emerged for less expensive meetings, for example charging less than \$20 if no food is served. Many even suggested scheduling events without fees whenever possible. Then, just to make things more interesting, equally strong support was voiced for the current “lavish tea” approach to refreshments.

- Clearly we want to have our cake and eat it too! We’ll do our best to offer a wide variety of programs at prices pleasing to all pocketbooks.
- Professor Jennifer Kloester’s “Witty Women: Jane Austen’s Influence on Georgette Heyer’s Regency Novels” June 2011 presentation was high on appeal and easy on the pocketbook.
- Unlike other Regions, we don’t charge our members yearly dues to help subsidize our local events. The meeting fees we charge only partially cover the costs of the meetings and mailings. Your generous donations, raffles, and sales at Pug’s help close the gap. And there’s no charge for the Monthly Discussion Group. Other “low budget events” will be scheduled in the months ahead.
- Not to worry! The Birthday Meeting, Saturday, December 3rd, will include our traditional champagne toast and a “lavish tea”.

## ?? SURVEY CONTINUED ??

Strong support continues for meeting on Saturday afternoons, but a surprising number of responders requested meetings on Sunday afternoons. Many of our affordable venues are churches, hence unavailable on Sundays. Nevertheless,

- Our Spring Regional Meeting will be held Sunday, March 4, 2012.
- The First Annual Book Exchange will be held on a Sunday in February, 2012.

Your Wish is Our Command. Here are some topics you suggested for upcoming meetings and our responses:

- Regency Dress/Accessories/Jewelry. The Fall Regional Meeting, September 10, 2011 featured Lisa Brown, "Dressing the Miss Bennets".
- Regency Architecture/Interior Décor. For our Birthday Meeting on Saturday, December 3, 2011, we have Sean Sawyer, Executive Director, Royal Oak Foundation, "Beyond the Silver Screen – The National Trust takes on Jane Austen and the Regency."
- "Accessible" Academics Strongly Preferred. At the next Spring Regional Meeting, Sunday, March 4, 2012, our featured speaker will be the popular Professor Marcia Folsom.
- Gardens, Landscapes and "Improvement." Next year's Box Hill Picnic will hold a few surprises for you!
- Laws of Inheritance. Earlier this year, Sabina Hollis discussed the Legal Issues of the Entail and "Downton Abbey" at a discussion group,
- Here are other popular topics that emerged - please let us know if you have suggestions for speakers!
  - o Daily Life at All Levels of Society – Servants and Gentry
  - o JASNA Goes to the Movies
  - o Food In Jane Austen's Time
  - o Regency Gaming
  - o Dance Classes

Please don't wait for the next survey to share ideas! We welcome your feedback at all times. JASNA NY will continue to flourish only as long as you remain active, enthusiastic participants.

*Linda Dennerly*

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### A Sampling of Responses:

"I am proud and happy to be a member of JASNA NY Metro Region!"

"I have ambivalent feelings about the Juvenilia/Old Fogies divide. I'm in my mid-fifties, and, as a Baby Boomer, I don't feel like an old fogey. I have this nagging suspicion that I'm being excluded from fun events. On the other hand, if Juvenilia is all youngsters doing Twitter and Facebook, maybe I'm better off with the Golden Oldies after all."

"Keep it light; avoid pomposity."

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## ?? SURVEY CONTINUED ??

“The “food is provided” would have to be more than little bits of buffet items that have to be eaten standing up to be worth \$40 to me!”

“Hopefully, this is anonymous. We have a few members who seem a little “proud” and can put a bit of a damper on discussions and/or games. But maybe because of their incredible knowledge, they have the right to be proud. How Jane-appropriate can ya get??? As far as socializing goes, I’m pretty shy and it takes a lot for me to go outside my comfort zone. But I am trying!”

“I am blessed to be a member of one of the most organized, kind, dedicated and hard-working chapters of JASNA that exists. I thank them for all that they do so that we can happily share love of Austen and Regency era England.”

“You guys rock!”

## Web and Social Media Sites

### Web Pages

[www.jasnaNY.org](http://www.jasnaNY.org) New York Metropolitan Region  
[www.jasna.org/agms/newyork](http://www.jasna.org/agms/newyork) AGM2012

### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/groups/jasnany](http://www.facebook.com/groups/jasnany) New York Metropolitan Region  
[www.facebook.com/Jasnany2012](http://www.facebook.com/Jasnany2012) AGM2012

### Twitter

[twitter.com/#!/JASNA\\_NY](https://twitter.com/#!/JASNA_NY) New York Metropolitan Region  
[twitter.com/#!/JASNA\\_2012\\_AGM](https://twitter.com/#!/JASNA_2012_AGM) AGM2012

### email address

[jasnaNY@yahoo.com](mailto:jasnaNY@yahoo.com) New York Metropolitan Region  
[jasna2012@gmail.com](mailto:jasna2012@gmail.com) AGM2012

## Regional Coordinators'

### Comment

The first half of this year has been a very busy one for our Region. From the weekend conference at West Point in March to the Box Hill picnic at the Botanical Garden in June, we've had many opportunities to meet and celebrate Jane Austen, her work, life and times. We are also approaching the close of our fiscal year and we are pleased to report our financial position is solid. Our membership is growing. And we would be quite remiss if we failed to acknowledge the generosity of countless individual members, the great success of Pug's Boutique - thanks to the tireless efforts of Kerri Spennicchia - and the wonderful grants we have received from The Giopp Charitable Foundation and other Special Donors who wish to remain anonymous. These grants enable us to pursue such special outreach activities as the Brooklyn Book Festival and enable JASNA to sponsor workshops and award prizes to talented young writers. We are truly grateful for your generous gifts. We also express the appreciation of all our members for the tireless and selfless work of our many volunteers. Thank you one and all.

*Thank you one and all.*

*Linda Dennery and Meg Levin, Regional Coordinators*



Meg Levin



Linda Dennery

#### Officers:

- Regional Coordinators: Linda Dennery and Meg Levin  
Tel: 212-757-9032 (Linda) , 212-865-0485 (Meg),  
Email [jasnany@yahoo.com](mailto:jasnany@yahoo.com)
- Asst RC: Kerri Spennicchia  
Tel: 212-819-7569, Email: [kspennic@ix.netcom.com](mailto:kspennic@ix.netcom.com)
- Program Chair: Joyce Melito  
Tel: 212-986-9438, Email: [joycemelito@yahoo.com](mailto:joycemelito@yahoo.com)
- Treasurer: Diane Mangasarian  
Tel: 212-579-3668, Email: [mangasariandiane@aol.com](mailto:mangasariandiane@aol.com)
- Secretary: Mary Ann Linahan  
Tel: 718-896-2469, Email: [m linahan@aol.com](mailto:m linahan@aol.com)

#### Committee Chairs

- Discussion Group Leader: Barbara Helling  
Tel: 631-727-8666, Email: [helling@aol.com](mailto:helling@aol.com)
- Discussion Group Mailing: Mary Ann Linahan  
Tel: 718-896-2469, Email: [m linahan@aol.com](mailto:m linahan@aol.com)
- Food Coordinator: Shirley Safran  
Tel: 212-532-8043, Email: [sds2ee@aol.com](mailto:sds2ee@aol.com)
- Juvenilia Coordinator: Email: [janesjuvenilia@gmail.com](mailto:janesjuvenilia@gmail.com)  
Jaclyn Green-Stock 914-216-8720
- New Members: Linda Pedro  
Tel: 212-734-2575, Email: [lindapedro@aol.com](mailto:lindapedro@aol.com)
- Newsletter Copy Editor: Rosanna Anderson
- Pug's Boutique Manager: Kerri Spennicchia

#### Other

- Web Master Jerry Vetowich
- Local Database Administrator: Linda Dennery

## 2012 AGM Update

JASNA's Annual General Meeting in Brooklyn will run from October 5 to 7, 2012. Wow, that's only a year away now! It is going to be a fabulous AGM – the best ever. Why? Because this AGM is in New York. Ours is a large Region and we have creative, energetic and dedicated members who each contribute their talents and time. If you have volunteered and we haven't called on you yet, don't worry. Your particular talents will be needed as we get closer to the time, and we will need everyone to pitch in during the week of the AGM. If you have not yet volunteered, please consider doing so and write to us at [jasna2012@gmail.com](mailto:jasna2012@gmail.com).

The program we have lined up is fresh and exciting, and now we can give you more details. If you've been following our updates, you know the theme next year is Sex, Money and Power in Jane Austen's Fiction. Addressing those topics will be plenary speakers:

Anna Quindlen - Pulitzer Prize winning novelist and N.Y. Times columnist,

Cornel West,  
University Professor at Princeton

Sandy Lerner,  
Founder of Chawton House Library

Daniel James Cole - Costume designer, Adjunct Professor, Fashion Institute of Technology



More than talks are on the schedule. Our own Lynn Marie Macy has written a short play that will have its premiere as a staged reading at The Morgan Museum and Library on the evening of Thursday, Oct



4th. Those attending the performance will be able to come early to enjoy the museum's many exhibits. In particular, they will be able to view a page from the manuscript of

Jane Austen's early, unfinished novel, *The Watsons*. The Morgan has agreed to display this treasure in the beautifully restored Library.

On Friday evening, Oct 5th, soprano Julianne Baird, who has appeared as soloist with major symphony orchestras, will perform in a program based on Jane Austen and her favorite music.

On Sunday, Oct 7th, a post-AGM concert by the Vassar Women's Chorus will include choral works commissioned specifically for this occasion. The concert will be followed by the traditional post-meeting dinner, which will take place at the historic Plymouth Church of the Pilgrims. This will give us a chance to let our hair down and "talk Jane."

The AGM's schedule will also include many special interest sessions including talks by Declan Kiely, head of The Morgan's department of literary and historical manuscripts, and by architectural historian, Francis Morrone. We will have dancing lessons by our own Beverly Francis, reticule workshop by our own Maureen O'Connor, a banquet, panel discussions, tours and more. Please check the website for further updates.

Conference Coordinators  
Nili Olay and Jerry Vetowich

# Austen Chronicle

NY Metro Edition

DATE	EVENTS
Saturday Dec 3rd Birthday Meeting	Sean Sawyer "Beyond The Silver Screen : The National Trust Takes on Jane Austen and the Regency."
Saturday Jan 21, 2012 Day Trip	Yale Center for British Art
February 2012	Book Exchange
Sunday Mar 4, 2012 Spring Meeting	Professor Marcia Folsom TBA



JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA  
2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, NEW YORK CITY

**SEX, MONEY AND POWER**  
*in Jane Austen's Fiction*

OCTOBER 5-7, 2012



**JASNA - New York Metro Region**

*Margarita Levin*  
771 West End Ave  
New York, NY 10025  
jasnaNY@yahoo.com  
www.jasnaNY.org