

# JASNA

Jane Austen Society of North America. Calgary. January, 2006.

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*"There are those who think Jane Austen tea-tablish, as there are those who think that Mozart tinkles."* Louis Kronenberger

## Homework for the January Meeting???

What better way to spend some of your holiday break than re-reading Northanger Abbey and Persuasion in preparation for the January 21 meeting? **Diana Patterson**, an English professor at Mount Royal College will be speaking on Jane Austen and Bath, and will illustrate her talk with slides depicting 19<sup>th</sup> Century Bath, with special reference to those novels which are partially set there. It should be a great way to start off the New Year, so mark your calendar now! This meeting will be held at our regular room in the William Castell library, from 2:00 to 4:00.

This is also the time of year to renew our membership in the Calgary chapter of JASNA, so please bring along your cheque. Yearly membership is still just \$15... what a deal for a year of erudite scholarship with other Austen enthusiasts!

As well, Linda Payne will be giving us the highlights of the JASNA AGM in Milwaukee and giving us 101 reasons that we should all become members of our parent organization. Linda has completed her two year stint as our Regional Coordinator, and I am taking up the slack. I'm sure you will all wish to join with me in thanking Linda for a job well done!

- Randie Lind

## An Afternoon Tea With The Bennets

We all enjoyed our 2005 Jane Austen Birthday Tea celebrated on November 5<sup>th</sup> at Cliff-Bungalow Community Hall. Congratulations to tea co-ordinator Jennifer Hamblin, and her committee made up of Patricia Barton, Margaret Crichton, Deirdre Harris, and Susan Spooner, as well as helpers Colin Crichton, Justine and Renee Matsalla.

Regional Co-ordinator Linda Payne proposed the toast to Jane Austen, which was followed by wonderful food, conversation, and our raffle. Thanks to everyone who donated raffle items, food, or brought equipment.

The highlight of the afternoon was Patricia Barton's adaptation of Pride and Prejudice. The readers were Randie Lind, Bill Sherlock, Murray Leslie, Elizabeth Marshall, Jenifer Meynell, Fran Birzins, and Elvee Fenning. Musical interludes were provided by "The Broken Consort" (Carla Has, Patricia Barton, Christine Azad, and Angela Harries), who also played the music for our Calgary Chapter's troupe of dancers – "Sprigged Muslin". Dancers included Jennifer Hamblin, Alicia Morgan, Heidi Dick, Sandra Vida, Susan Spooner, Deirdre Harris, Margaret Crichton, and Penney Kome who was kind enough to be a last minute substitute.

Thank you again to Jennifer Hamblin for organizing another great tea.  
Linda Payne

**.....and then after the Jane Austen Tea came  
the Jane Austen Tea committee tea.**

This tea party was held on December 3rd by the Jane Austen Tea committee to celebrate another successful collaboration. This tea was held at the lovely tea room, Dove's Nest at Glenmore Landing. The fabulous selection of teas and scrumptious sandwiches and cakes were surpassed only by our sparkling conversation.

A very festive time was had by all!

### **Cantos Music Foundation**

The well-interpreted tour of the Cantos Music Foundation by several of our members and guests last November was a journey into musical history, and viewing their over 200 magnificent collection of musical and electronic instruments from 246 B.C. to the present day could make a viewer feel gloriously giddy amid such treasure..

On display were treasured pipe organs, clavichords, synthesizers, drum machines, related artifacts, a one-of-a-kind Couchet harpsichord from 1679, a Kimball Theatre Organ from 1924, an impressive variety of Moog electronic instruments, a Mellotron similar to that used by the Beatles, and a John Elton piano on which his last four albums were composed. Some attendees made comment that the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Jane Austen would have been familiar with many of the instruments as many of her characters played some of those seen. The forms of furniture, desks, tables, etc., which artistically encased and hid some of the old musical instruments shown staggered the imagination.

Members and guests took full advantage of the 'hands on' invitation to make sounds on many of the instruments. Souls were stirred and spontaneous bursts of smiles, laughter and joy ensued as a result. The Cantos collection – the name Cantos has a Latin connotation meaning 'song' (we were told) – is second in size to the Smithsonian Institute collection and lends a high note to this city's presence on the world stage of music study and appreciation. The priceless Collection, programs and tours of Cantos deliver excellent concerts and musical training that appeals to all ages and enhances the skills of mathematics and science in the early grades of children's education.

I think the imaginative Jane Austen would have had a delightful time and thoroughly enjoyed writing about our Calgary Chapter's excursion to the Calgary's Cantos Music Foundation  
- Fran Birzins

### **Pride and Prejudice – The Latest Movie**

Are there too many treatments of Pride and Prejudice? Not for a Janeite!

The latest movie, starring Keira Knightly as Elizabeth Bennett, was enjoyed by a group of Jasna Calgary members – and many others have seen it with other friends. Our group thoroughly enjoyed the new movie, despite a few flaws, such as the soppy ending for the American market.

We all agreed that the minor characters were very well done, especially Mr. Collins, who seemed much more human than in other shows, and just as funny. Donald Sutherland took some getting used to as Mr. Bennett. As the movie went on, he seemed

to fit the part better, although his careless shaving never did translate believably as a symbol of his careless family management. Judi Dench as Lady Catherine was positively horrifying, someone Mr. Collins would indeed fear.

This treatment of *Pride and Prejudice* paints the historical scenes with a modern wash, particularly in Elizabeth's character. Keira Knightly is a good choice for his edgier heroine – someone freer and less accepting of her multi-sistered fate. Her emotional turmoil is apparent as she tries to both manage her family's behaviour and find her own destiny. In concert with Elizabeth, Mr. Darcy, played by Matthew McFayden, reveals more of his emotions in this movie, helping us really believe in his transformation when he makes his second and more romantic proposal.

– Judith Umbach

**Contest! Contest! Contest! Contest! contest!**  
**Name the Newsletter Contest!!**

It has been suggested that our newsletter could use a snappier title. Do we want to go back to *My Dear Cassandra*? Have you an absolutely brilliant alternative??

Please bring your ideas to the January meeting.

### **On becoming a Governess**

Governesses and their sorry plight are a staple of nineteenth-century literature. Jane Eyre, Agnes Grey, the nameless heroine of the Turn of the screw, and Mme Vine in *East Lynne* are just a few examples. In *Emma* we are introduced to a governess, Miss Taylor, who, at the very beginning of the novel marries a local squire, Mr Weston. Miss Taylor has been a true member of the family and much more of a friend than a subordinate to Emma. Although she moves to her own household and becomes a mother by the end of the novel, Mr. Woodhouse never stops lamenting the fate of "Poor Miss Taylor that was." Readers must laugh at Mr. Woodhouse's idea that it is better to be a governess in his home than to find a husband and happiness for oneself. One of the most poignant feature of the plight of Jane Fairfax, however, is that she seems destined to become a governess. The reality of course is that few governesses find themselves as comfortably situated as "Miss Taylor that was." Probably even fewer actually marry the master of the establishment, as does Jane Eyre. Most governesses were paid very poorly and had no natural allies in a home. They were regarded as servants, in spite of being educated. They were not necessarily accepted by their fellow servants, as indicated by Mrs. Blenkinsop in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. "They give themselves the hairs and hupstarts of ladies and their wages is no better then you nor me." Nor were they necessarily treated well by their charges. Ann Bronte's *Agnes Grey* describes the bratty ungovernability of the young children she is forced to teach. The disconcerting reader understands that Mrs. Elton's officious meddling with Jane Fairfax is bad enough, but that her scheme to fine Jane employment as a governess with one of her vulgar friends would be an untenable position for the sensitive Jane

*The Friendly Jane Austen* by Natalie Tyler. (page 184)

***Houston, we have a problem!***

So said Tom Hanks in the movie Apollo 13.  
Maybe our problem is not as dramatic as his, but,  
***JASNA members, we have a problem!***

Due to the fact that I have been unable to contact Barbara Wilson to supply us with the answers to her crossword puzzle printed in a previous newsletter, I am requesting those who have completed (and almost completed) the puzzle to fax me your puzzle and then in a process of elimination – voila! – I will solve the puzzle – Ann Craig – fax 212-1480

**Wow - They do this in Victoria, too!**

"A hurried week-end trip to Victoria on Dec. 3rd to visit an old neighbour and attend the Victoria Chapter's celebration of Jane Austen's 230th birthday and the 2005 festivity of a Christmas Luncheon at the historic Union Club was an occasion of goodwill and warm fellowship that one comes to expect of a JASNA gathering year after year, after year. Over 60 devoted members and happy guests attended. A light, bright and cheerful presentation by Freydis Welland, of a handsome book, entitled, *Life in the Country*, containing Jane Austen quotations and newly-published stunning silhouettes by James Edward Austen-Leigh, was a treasure gratefully received by the hosting President, Janet Bell, for their library.

After tasty food that lent to tradition, reminiscences and stimulating table-talk, Dr. June Sturrock of Simon Fraser University, delivered an arresting discussion of *Emma*, *Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice* and related the main characters in each of these famous masterpieces to her topic of "Spoiled" children. The stimulating subject aroused a deeper understanding not only of the main characters but of the behaviours of those with whom they interacted.

After a hearty exchange of holiday good wishes, attendees were given a grand finale surprise in being introduced to Verity, the 5-week-old baby girl of a Victoria member who begins her family's third generation of loyalty to Jane Austen literature. Sleeping ever so soundly and safely in her Daddy's arms had us think Verity was resting up for Santa and the new year. The old and new was never better celebrated.

- Linda Payne

**Remember the "Ready for a simple test" ?,  
Well, here are the answers.**

1.6.3, 2.3.5, 3.22, 4.4.3, 5.1.6, 6.5.1

**Don't forget.....**

.....you can purchase your annual dues at \$15, plus buy a pin for \$6

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