

My Dear Cassandra

“What calm lives they had, those people! No worries about the French Revolution, or the Napoleonic War’s - *Winston Churchill, on Jane Austen’s novels*
(Extract from “Jane Austen” by Natalie Tyler)

JANE AUSTEN Birthday Tea

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year’s Jane Austen Birthday Tea such a success. Special thanks to Pat Barton for her wonderful talk on “Dancing Through the Years” and to Sprigged Muslin for illustrating Pat’s references so well. The raffle was very successful and had a variety of great prizes. Thanks to our members for such fine donations. The money raised will go towards the May GALA to help with expenses. To refresh your memory, or see what you missed, please go to our website for photos of the tea.
www.jasnacalgary.ca

Our next meeting,

on March 19, featuring two presentations.

“Jane Austen’s Tea Set and the Popularity of Josiah Wedgwood” ~ Diana Patterson
and “Charity in Jane Austen’s World” ~ Michelle Agosowicz

Jane Austen’s Tea Set and the Popularity of Josiah Wedgwood

Typically Jane Austen does not spend much time describing things in detail. She names things fairly accurately, and concentrates on character and plot. This penchant leaves her work open to historical analysis in many fields. One of these is ceramics.

By the time Jane Austen is writing, we can make certain assumptions about the taking of tea and eating of meals and their connection to The Potteries, where the English ceramics industry is based. Josiah Wedgwood was a particularly important influence on ceramics just before Austen’s time, and this talk will examine some of the kinds of tea and dinner sets that Austen assumes we would imagine when she says “Emma smiled and chatted as cheerfully as she could, to keep [her father] from such for him not to say exactly as he had said at dinner. . . “ [Emma, I:4] - where both dinner setting and tea setting are just assumed to be understood.

Diana Patterson is an associate professor of English at Mount Royal University and has been interested in 18th century arts and crafts, particularly book binding and printing, gardening, dressmaking, and ceramics for many years. This presentation is enhanced by Diana’s recent visit to Stoke-on-Trent with a ceramics designer, including a visit to the new Josiah Wedgwood Museum.

Charity in Jane Austen's World

Michelle Agopsowicz, who has a Masters of Social Work, will explore what Jane Austen would have understood about charity. She will discuss the roles of charity played by women, poverty, and charity as thought versus charity as deed. Michelle's perspective from many years in social work will give us insight into how this understanding of charity influenced the characters in the novels.

News from the Dance Floor

Sprigged Muslin, the dance group linked to our local JASNA Chapter will now be meeting at Prairie Sky Co-Housing on the last Monday of the month. Ruth Stevens is taking over the role of dance mistress as the beloved and esteemed Pat Barton, has retired to a consulting role. We will miss her stories and the benefit of her vast knowledge and experience, but are confident that Ruth will ably put us through our paces and lead us on to new glories!

~ Randi Lind

Special Thanks!

Our thanks to Pat Barton, Elvee Fenning and Isobel Temple for the lovely teacups.

Michelle Agopsowicz's husband designed our beautiful new bookmarks and generously donated his time. Thank you, Charles!

.and now a note from the JASNA Edmonton group.

(Sheila’s note refers to Juliet McMaster’s presentation at the JASNA Annual General Meeting 2010: Portland: Jane Austen and the abbey: mystery, mayhem, and muslin in Portland.
Juliet’s speech - Jane Austen’s Children.)

I thought I would let you know about today's meeting which was really special because we were able to listen to Juliet's Portland speech. It was excellent, as usual, and covered a defense of the fact that we relate to fictional characters as if they were alive, also a define of gothic novels in that they did get Catherine on the way to being a reader and moving into developing her mind and senses. Juliette related the novel even more to gothic romances than the links I have heard before so this was very interesting and entertaining, also the deeper and shallower relationships between the characters was explored in relation to expression and therefore back to reading and how it develops our minds.

We got some news of future programs. Next month a member is going to talk about searching for Jane on a trip to England. In April we have the launching of the book of Bruce Stovel's

essays and we will be having a gala in May (fourth Saturday as usual) - no details yet. In June we have our relaxing Regency Food Fayre as usual.

Keep in touch with your activities, Sincerely, Sheila Dechant. Edmonton JASNA

(Ed.note: All of the JASNA Annual General Meeting submissions are now available on-line. They can be accessed through www.jasna.org)

Ed. Note.....while ‘cruising’ the internet, I noticed this thought from our JASNA group in Nova Scotia.....I think it’s a great idea.

Welcome to the Jane Austen Society of North America ~ Nova Scotia Region

The Regional Co-ordinator for JASNA – Nova Scotia, is Anne Thompson, and you may contact her @ anne_thompson@ns.sympatico.ca

June ~ A “Wilde” Strawberry Afternoon Tea, to be held at Anne’s house in the sunny hills of Armdale. Lilian suggested we review Oscar Wilde’s play, “*The Importance of Being Earnest*” and compare and contrast his characters, plot and witticisms with those of Jane Austen.

Newsletter Changes

Ann Craig has been our ‘Dear Cassandra’ editor since March 2004 and has faithfully delighted us with many interesting topics in every newsletter. Thank you so much, Ann! But it is time for a change and Ann needs a rest! We will have a time of open discussion regarding the newsletter at our next meeting so please bring along any great ideas you have! If you’d like to be involved, please call Catherine at 403 242 5016.

Jane Austen Calgary Contacts:

Regional Coordinator : Catherine Gardner ~ 403-242-5016

Program Coordinator : Helen Gardner ~ 403-242-5016

Dance Group: Sprigged Muslin – Randi Lind ~ 403-284-4059

Member’s Corner : Alicia Morgan ~ 403-241-0963

Website: www.jasnacalgary.ca

Our next Meeting: March 19, 2011

Meeting place: Sunalta Community Centre, 10th Ave and 16th St SW

Deadline for articles for the Newsletter : 10th of the month.
Change of address / email and any articles for this newsletter,
please contact Ann Craig ancraig@shaw.ca