

JASNA

Jane Austen Society of North America. Calgary. September 2004

Jane Austen's six novels and miscellaneous writings can be studied and enjoyed for a lifetime, and so we begin another year of discussions, learning, and fellowship.

Items on the agenda for the September 18th meeting:

Memberships for the rest of 2004 to be sold for \$5.00 (to cover the costs of our meeting room, coffee supplies, future speakers, and the newsletter).

A full year's membership is sold in January.

Report on our November Tea. Tickets to be sold for \$5.00.

Raffle prizes for the Tea are needed. Please speak to or telephone Rita Dempsey (287-2992) or Linda Payne (252-0855) if you have anything to donate

Discussion about the 2005 GALA. The Edmonton chapter of JASNA has decided to hold their own GALA in Edmonton next year. Therefore, we will be discussing our options:

- a No GALA (meetings in September, January, and March, plus the November Tea);
- b Attend the Edmonton GALA (we've been invited);
- c. Plan a regular Saturday afternoon meeting in May (2:00 – 4:00 p.m.);
- d. Organize our own GALA in Calgary in May/June for a Saturday (10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.). It will be possible to co-ordinate the dates with Edmonton, so the anyone interested could attend both GALAs.

Treasurer's report. Elvee Fenning's two-year term of office will be finished in December.

A volunteer is needed to take over this position.

Cookies: June Grant

Coffee Supplies: Margaret and Murray Leslie, June Grant

.....and for your further entertainment.....*Hands Off My Man*

Jane Austen was adept at portraying scenes of 'civil' verbal sparring. Think of the conversation between Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Darcy during their first dance, or the confrontation later in Pride and Prejudice between Elizabeth and Lady Catherine de Burgh when Lady Catherine tries to extract a promise from Elizabeth that she will not marry Mr. Darcy. The program for our September meeting will feature readings from three conversations between those 'civil' adversaries Lucy Steele and Elinor Dashwood. In between rounds of the sparring match you will be invited to discuss the interchange and decide who has come out on top. Don't miss it!

From the Regional Co-ordinator - Linda Payne

Now isn't this interesting.....

Pride and Prejudice seems to be an updated retelling of Shakespeare's *Much ado about Nothing*. Not only are there the sparring future lovers resisting their attraction that's so obvious to everyone else, but there's also the subplot of Benedick/Darcy rescuing a young female relative of Beatrice/Elizabeth from a highly unsuitable relationship with a bounder: Claudio/Wickham

- Tiffany Holmes, author (*Friendly Jane Austen* p.136)

Jane Austen Birthday Tea

A tribute in hats will be the theme of our annual tea in honour of Jane Austen. Bring out your hats - pretty or flamboyant, flowered or tailored, trim or fantastic...even a touque if you can imagine how Jane would have worn it! The time for the tea is the same **2pm**. The date has shifted a bit to the last Saturday in **November, the 27th**. The location has shifted a bit to the **Cliff-Bungalow Mission Community Hall**(also a school, built in 1926), a few blocks west of last year's location. The address is **2201 Cliff Street SW**. Access is from 5 Street and 22 Avenue SW. There is lots of on-street parking. At our September meeting we will have the cards for you to help with our self-catering. Also, we will ask you to confirm your volunteer positions to help present the tea. Thanks to all those who have helped organize through the spring and summer.

- Judith Umbach

Mrs. Darcy's Dilemma *an Austen sequel by Diana Birchall*

Diana Birchall, author of In Defense of Mrs. Elton, has announced publication of her new work, Mrs. Darcy's Dilemma. Diana is a member of JASNA, and I became acquainted with her first through the Janeites and Dorothy Sayers on-line discussion groups. Later I met her in person when she spoke at a Women in History conference at the University of Calgary about her first book, Onoto Watanna, the life of Winnifred Eaton, a biography of her grandmother, a sometime Calgary resident. In Defense of Mrs. Elton was given to participants at one of the JASNA general meetings. Mrs. Darcy's Dilemma is set in 1837, and features the middle-aged Darcys and their offspring and is available from Amazon in paperback.

- Randi Lind

talking of Sequels.....

Here is a list of Pride and Prejudice sequels that hit the bookshelves in the past few years.

The Jane Austen Book Club by Karen Joy Fowler,

Mr. Darcy Takes a Wife: Pride and Prejudice Continues, by Linda Berdoll

Conviction: A Sequel to Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, by Skylar Hamilton Burris

Excessively Diverted: A Sequel to Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, by Juliette Shapiro

Desire and Duty: A Sequel to Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, by Ted Bader

Presumption: An Entertainment, A Sequel to Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice
by Julia Barrett

(excerpt from National Post, Review & Books, June 12, 2004)

Spring GALA 2004

The JASNA Alberta Spring GALA took place at the North Hill Inn in Red Deer on June 5. Thank you to the joint conveners: our own Elizabeth Marshall, and Joan Satchwill (of the Edmonton chapter). The theme of "Music, Dancing and Balls in the Time of Jane Austen or Jane Austen and All That Jazzna" developed into a wonderful day.

Dr. Nora Stovel's presentation of "Dancing to the Altar: Choreographing Courtship in the Ball Scenes of Jane Austen's Novels" united video clips from the Austen movies with an excellent talk. Bridget Toms read Jennifer Caines' paper on "Jane Austen the Muscian: A

Devoted Amateur”, followed by Bridget and Anita Gainer singing examples of songs of the period.

The afternoon was directed by Pat Barton. Her illustrated lecture was entitled “The Evolution of Dance”, and after the coffee break, Pat bravely took on the challenge of teaching us a few country dances. During her talk and dance class she was ably assisted by her troupe of dancers: Margaret Crichton, Heidi Dick, Jennifer Hamblin, Deirdre Harris, Randie Lind, Alicia Morgan, Sandra Vida, and Barbara Wilson.

A raffle was held for Shannon Campbell’s delightful period floral arrangement, and Bill Sherlock’s Liberty silk scarf from the 2003 JASNA AGM in England. Thank you Shannon and Bill. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to such a fine day of learning and pleasure.

- Linda Payne

limericks..... limericks..... limericks..... limericks

I'm think of re-reading Jane Austen
By her novels I'm continually besotted
But there's so many books
And the clock never stops,
Commitment's too easily forgotten!
by Helene Tonnisen

Anne's a character to discover
A study from cover to cover
Her qualities divine
Passion of kind
Find Wentworth a well-chosen lover.
by Fran Birzins

***Sense and Sensibility in the use of grammar.
By Wendy Williams***

“Eats, shoots and leaves” by Lynne Truss has hit the top of the non-fiction best-seller lists on both sides of the Atlantic. It is a book about English grammar, and Ms. Truss manages to makes it amusing and witty. Her title is a winner, because it contains a cute joke that makes the importance of the humble comma utterly clear.

“A panda walks into a café. He orders a sandwich, eats it, then draws a gun and fires two shots in the air.

“Why?” asks the confused waiter, as the panda makes towards the exit. The panda produces a badly punctuated wildlife manual and tosses it over his shoulder.

“I’m a panda,” he says at the door. “Look it up.”

The waiter turns to the relevant entry and, sure enough, finds an explanation.

“Panda. Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China.

Eats, shoots and leaves.”

Miss Jane Austen, of course, always uses her punctuation perfectly – she uses each comma like a diamond to illuminate and pace her writing. She is so skilled with her use of grammar that she can utilize it to achieve distinctiveness for her characters. For example: in “Emma”, Miss Bates’ speech at the ball runs for nearly one and a half pages, and uses dashes, commas, semi-colons, brackets, periods, and exclamation marks to make the speech ripple along like a brook running forever. John Thorpe, in “Northanger Abbey” is another character who talks a great deal, chiefly about horses, and who speaks in exclamations. Unfortunately, like poor Miss Bates, their speeches fall on unwilling ears.

Characters who are likeable, like Elizabeth and Jane Bennet, Emma, Mr. Darcy and Mr. Knightly, speak much more briefly and use very little punctuation. Miss Austen's heroes in particular use very little punctuation, which emphasizes their direct and manly qualities. Heroines tend to use slightly longer sentences, with rather more commas, reminding us of their youth, relative inexperience, shyness or hesitancy. The interplay of short masculine and longer feminine sentences, with delicate grammatical pauses, gives the speeches the quality of a fencing match. This is particularly evident in the word play between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet during the ball scenes in "Pride and Prejudice". This conversation, when they first meet, is brief – a verbal fencing match. Characters who are not heroes, but minor amusing characters, deliver longer speeches in which the grammatical underpinnings reveal the effort to impress, rather than engage, a partner. Finally, have fun with the grammatical alternatives offered by the example in "Eats, shoots and leaves":

A woman, without her man, is nothing.

A woman: without her, man is nothing.

Try a different punctuation in the opening of "Pride and Prejudice":

"It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife."

The other "Famous Five"

The 75th anniversary of the Famous Five ladies, Edith Murphy, Irene Parlby, Louise McKinney, Henrietta Muir Edwards and Nellie McClung, is celebrated on October 18, 2004. The repressive social and economic conditions in which these 19th and 20th century ladies lived parallel, in many ways, the conditions described by Jane Austen and her five famous heroines, Elizabeth, Emma, Fanny, Anne and Catherine, in her 18th century novels. The DEEDS of the Famous Five and WORDS of the famous Jane Austen focus on human needs, hopes and desires in dire need of change, painfully overdue.

– Fran Birzin

Our expression of sympathy.....

We would like to extend our condolences to long-time JASNA member Fran Birzins upon the deaths of her husband Alfred (Alfie), and her grandson, Shane, who both died in April.

Dates to remember

Nov.27 – Jane Austen Birthday Tea

Jan. 15 - Meeting

March 19 - Meeting

We still have
Jane Austen Pins
@ \$6 each