

JASNA-Dayton Newsletter

www.jasnadayton.org

March 2017

JASNA President Claire Bellanti to Speak Sunday, April 23

On Sunday April 23 at Patterson Homestead JASNA-Dayton will welcome JASNA President Claire Bellanti speaking on the topic “You Can Get a Parasol at Whitby’s: Circulating Libraries in Jane Austen’s Time.” As a professional librarian, retired after 35 years at UCLA, Claire is particularly qualified to discourse upon her subject. Her talk will explore an 18th century social institution that was important both to Austen herself and to her characters. She will provide a brief history of the circulating library and include citations from Austen’s novels and letters to explain the central role of the circulating library and other forms of sharing books in Regency England. Claire’s talk is sponsored in part by JASNA. Be sure to take advantage of this opportunity to expand your knowledge of Austen’s England and to meet and talk with Claire herself.



The meeting will also feature shopping with Jane Austen Books, an experience we last enjoyed at our March meeting a year ago. Jane Austen Books handles all kinds of materials having to do with Jane Austen, from scholarly studies through films, fan fiction, and T-shirts; and also a wide range of books on Regency England. They are owned and operated by Jennifer Weinbrecht,



long-time Regional Coordinator of the Ohio North Coast Region, and her daughters, Beth Dean and Amy Patterson (Amy spoke to us last March on “The real Mr. Darcy”). Although they operate mostly as a mail-order house, they are a major presence at the JASNA AGMs. To get a head start on your shopping consult their website at www.janeaustenbooks.net. If you see something you particularly want, inform Jennifer at AustenBooks@gmail.com and she will bring it to Dayton on April 23.

Claire Bellanti “You Can Get a Parasol at Whitby’s”
Sunday, April 23, 2017
Patterson Homestead 1815 Brown Street, Dayton, OH 45409

Schedule

11:30 - 12:30	Arrival and Shopping
12:30- 1:30	High Tea and Announcements
1:30 - 3:30	Introduction; Talk by Claire Bellanti; Shopping
3:30 - 4:00	Farewells

Refreshments

*Dill Cucumber Salad; Lemon pepper Parmesan crackers;
peaches and cream scone and clotted cream*

*Vegetarian Quiche; Peas and carrots sandwich;
Turkey with basil mayonnaise sandwich*

*Fruit and Cheese skewers; Chocolate shortbread;
Honey cake*

Black Tea: Irish Breakfast; Herbal Tea: Chamomile



Cost: \$27 for JASNA members; \$30 for guests

RSVP: By April 18. Please send your check made payable to JASNA-Dayton along with your phone number and e-mail address to

Mary Ann Gasior
2727 Old Whipp Court
Centerville, OH 45440

For questions e-mail Mary Ann at gasiormaryann@yahoo.com or call her at (937)-434-5992.

Remembering Katie LePage

On February 17, 2017 JASNA-Dayton lost a much loved and valued member, Katie LePage. Together with her husband Peter she has been a regular and welcome presence at our programs and reading group meetings for many years. Many of our members will particularly remember the discussion she led at our November 2013 meeting on Austen's villains: "The Ones We Love to Hate: Austen Characters Most Likely to Appear on a Dartboard."

Thinking of Katie, the topic of the program Peter gave us ten years ago comes more to mind: "What do you have to do to be an Austen heroine?" Like Katie, the Austen heroine finds happiness through good sense and good cheer, channeled through her family and social circle.

Katie had a love for all books, with a special fondness for children's books. She lived her passion as the 'Story Lady' at the Blue Manatee in Oakley where they established 'The LePage Stage' in her honor. After being diagnosed with cancer she traveled the country as an inspirational speaker, addressing other cancer survivors. She faced her illness with exemplary courage, seeming never to lose her gentle wit or her generous good cheer.

Katie and Peter presented us with a picture of conjugal happiness as perfect as we might hope even for Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy. Peter has always said of her, "I married my best friend."



Besides attending our meetings together and dancing together at our balls, Katie and Peter sang in the choir at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church for the past 20 years. Since Peter's retirement, they took enviably long vacations to England each spring, sharing their delight in its literature and countryside.

We are grateful to have known Katie, to enjoyed her presence, and to be inspired by her example. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Peter in his mourning.



JASNA-Dayton Executive Committee

Elected Positions

Regional Coordinator	Carrie Bebris	937-436-3716 rc@jasnadayton.org
Program Coordinator	Angela Jaeger	
Reading Group Coordinator	Wilson Palmer	wilson3cp@gmail.com
Treasurer	Judy McCoy	
Secretary	Vacant	
Membership Coordinator	Deb Bentley	937-429-5123 extraone@woh.rr.com
Librarian	Eilanna Price	937-829-0492 eilanna.price@us.af.mil

Appointed Positions

Publicity Coordinator	Vacant	
Fundraising Coordinator	Camilla Mauzy	
Newsletter Editor	Meredith Stoehr	919-302-6528 stoeha@yahoo.com
Webmaster	Mariah Busher	

Executive Committee Openings

The list of Executive Committee members above shows two current vacancies: Secretary and Publicity Coordinator. A third position, my own as Newsletter Editor, is also in urgent need of filling, since I now reside in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The office of **Secretary** entails taking minutes at the board meetings, writing them up promptly, and distributing them to the members. The board meets three or four times a year.

The office of **Publicity Coordinator**, although specified in the By-Laws, has never yet been filled. It would involve disseminating information about JASNA-Dayton and its activities to the wider community, perhaps through newspaper announcements and articles, flyers, and so on.

The **Newsletter Editor** is responsible for putting out a newsletter at least a month before each meeting, of which there are usually three a year. The newsletter serves primarily to publicize JASNA-Dayton events to our own members and also to provide a record of our activities.

If you are interested, or think you might be interested, in taking on one of these jobs, please contact Regional Coordinator Carrie Bebris at rc@jasnadayton.org.

Regional Dues Eliminated

As reported in the last newsletter, JASNA has changed its bylaws to discontinue the practice of collecting Regional dues starting with the 2017-2018 program year. In compensation, all but the most prosperous Regions will receive a subsidy based on the number of members in the Region. Financially, this arrangement should be to our benefit, and it will streamline the structure of our Regional organization as well. Henceforth, all JASNA members who live within a two-hour driving radius of Dayton will be members of JASNA-Dayton, and all will receive the same communications and benefits of Regional membership.

New JASNA Membership Portal

JASNA's membership process has been streamlined this past year by offering online registration. Previously membership was handled entirely through the mail, with the Membership Secretary sending out renewal letters and members sending their checks back in reply. For the last several months, the membership page on JASNA's website has offered the (strongly preferred) option to create an account with JASNA for registering as a new or renewing member and paying on-line. Besides saving time and postage, this system offers the advantage of immediately updating the JASNA membership rolls.

JASNA-Dayton an Official Partner in Ohioana Book Festival, April 8



We are excited to announce that JASNA-Dayton is an official partner of the 2017 Ohioana Book Festival, an annual event that celebrates and connects readers with Ohio authors and their books.

2017 marks the 11th year of the Festival, which will be held **Saturday, April 8, 2017 from 10:30a.m.-5:00p.m.** at the **Sheraton Columbus Hotel at Capitol Square** (75 E. State St., Columbus, OH 43215). Readers can meet 120 Ohio authors representing all genres (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, children's and young adult). The event will include a book fair/book signing, panel discussions, children's and teen

activities, food trucks, and more. Admission is **free**—no ticket or advance registration required.

The event also includes numerous literature-related festival partners—literary societies, libraries, writers' organizations, university presses, etc. As a partnering organization, JASNA-Dayton will have a table where we can meet attendees and share information about JASNA and the Dayton Region. **We could use a few more volunteers.** If you are interested in covering a shift at JASNA-Dayton's table, please contact Mary Ann Gasior at gasiormaryann@yahoo.com or (937) 434-5992. (You'll have fun—we promise!)

JASNA-Dayton member Carrie Bebris has participated in the festival as an author numerous times, and was one of the festival's ten Featured Authors in 2011. "It's one of my favorite events," she says. "It's a great opportunity for readers and authors to meet, the panels generate lively, thought-provoking discussions, and it's inspiring to spend a whole day surrounded by books and people who love reading." Although Carrie isn't participating in the book signing this year because she doesn't have a new novel out, she's looking forward to moderating one of the author panels, representing JASNA-Dayton, and also to attending simply as a reader. "All authors begin as readers," she says. "In our hearts, we're fans just like everyone else at the festival, and I've discovered some wonderful books and authors there."



More information about the Ohioana Book Festival, including participating authors, partner organizations, activities, directions, and parking, can be found at <http://www.ohioana.org/programs/ohioana-book-festival/>. Note that at press time, the schedule posted was from 2016, but should be updated soon. (Meanwhile, it can give you an idea of the types of panels are offered.)

If you have additional questions about the event, contact Carrie at rc@jasnadayton.org

Carrie Bebris Talk July 20 to Commemorate Jane Austen's Death

July 18 this year marks the bicentenary of Jane Austen's death. To mark the event, Carrie Bebris will present a talk entitled

"Tracing Jane Austen's Literary Footsteps."

Thursday, July 20, 6:30 – 8:00

Community Room of newly remodeled Dayton Metro Library Main Branch
(120 S. Patterson Blvd., Dayton OH 45402)

The event will be a celebration of Austen's life and work. Carrie's talk will describe Austen's path to publication in a period when women were discouraged from writing professionally and novels were considered lowbrow entertainment. Carrie will also talk about how she recreates Austen's Regency England in her own novels.

Second Annual Twelfth Night Ball an Elegant Hit

JASNA Dayton welcomed the New Year with its second annual Twelfth Night Ball on January 7th at the Patterson Homestead. It was a delightful and elegant occasion featuring all the essential elements of a Regency-era party. Jean Long and Cynthia Manship reprised their last year's roles as gracious hostesses Lady Russell and Mrs. Jennings. The Patterson Homestead staff contributed to the Regency atmosphere as costumed servers, with Ross Gaby as butler announcing the guests as they entered the ballroom.



Carrie and James Bebris Enter the Ballroom

Tom Tumbusch, assisted by his wife Toni, again led the dancing and instruction with exemplary clarity and aplomb. Tom is a dance master who could not possibly be improved upon. In the card room, Fred Rueth and James Bebris offered assistance where needed to players at whist, loo, commerce and *vignt-et-un*. The supper included white soup, tea sandwiches, mincemeat pies, topped off by a superb Twelfth Cake.



Tom and Toni Tumbusch



Zoe Shade Lucky Prize Winner

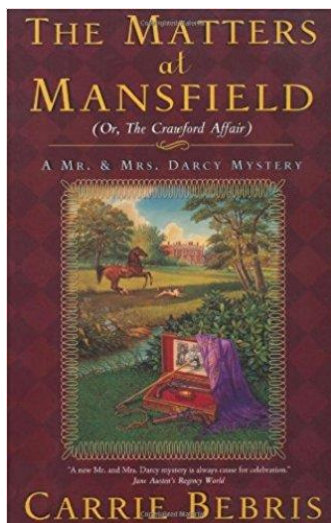


Tori Manship

We thank Tori Manship for heading up the Twelfth Night committee; the other Program Committee members, Angela Jaeger, Mary Ann Gasior, Cynthia Manship, and Marilyn Rueth, for their work in putting the event together; and our RC Carrie Bebris, an ex officio member of the Program Committee who also always does a significant share of the work.



July 23: Summer Reading Group Meeting to Discuss *Matters at Mansfield*



Last year's summer Reading Group session on Carrie Bebris' first Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Mystery, *Pride and Prescience* was a really remarkable experience. With the author present, we were able to ask her directly about the choices she made in developing the plot; in employing Austen characters for her own purposes; in adding new characters. Carrie's answers gave us valuable insights into her creative process. This coming summer we skip to Carrie's fourth Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Mystery, in which Henry Crawford, with his usual devastating effect, meets Anne de Burgh; and Mr. and Mrs. Darcy hasten to the rescue at Mansfield Park.

The meeting will be held on July 23 at Eilanna Price's home, 2334 Lostwood Court in Xenia.

Reading Group Continues Lively Interaction with *Mansfield Park*

Reading Group Coordinator Wilson Palmer, sent me this comment after the last meeting: “There were a number of us that just sighed with delight at the end of the discussion. It is sooo much fun as you well know. It got into a little raucous debate with everyone talking at once at the end such that it was quite humorous. We were out of time and everyone had an opinion to share.” Obviously, *Mansfield Park’s* ugly duckling status among the Austen novels has been overcome by our Reading Group.

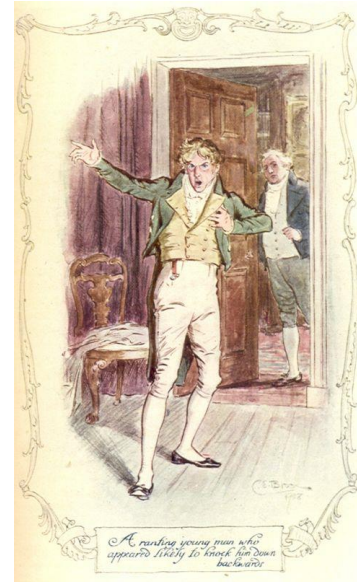
Since the last newsletter, two sessions have taken place. On February 12 (appropriately close to Valentine’s Day), we discussed the *Lovers’ Vows* section of *Mansfield Park*; and on March 12 we took up the return of Sir Thomas and the fateful consequences it set in train.

Tori Manship was discussion leader for the February session. She led off with a summary of *Lovers’ Vows* and how the personalities of the characters in the play reflect on the characters who play them in *Mansfield Park*. This provided much fruit for discussion, especially concerning Henry and his character Frederick, who share an unfortunate lack of foresight and moral compass. The picture of Fanny, quiet and content in her chilly school room while jealousy and lust rage in the theater below, was an outstanding image from this section of the book.

Mariah Busher, discussion leader for the March session, based her approach on Mary Waldron’s *Jane Austen and the Fiction of Her Time*. Mariah reminded us to resist equating Fanny’s thoughts with the voice of the narrator. She called Fanny an unreliable narrator, judgmental and too much blinded by love of Edmund, jealousy of Mary and repugnance towards Henry to be objective.

In the e-mails he sent out before both meetings, Wilson stressed the importance of the idea of a good marriage and good husbands and wives in *Mansfield Park*. He brought up the comparison of clerical wives in the novel – Mrs. Norris, Mrs. Grant, and ultimately Fanny – setting rather a low bar for our heroine. He also talks, more seriously, about an allusion to *Proverbs* 31:10-30 made by Henry, who says he does not wish to “eat the bread of idleness.” That phrase comes from a description of the good wife, whose “price is “above rubies.” Could that phrase have inspired Fanny’s surname?

Our sincere thanks go to Wilson, Tori, and Mariah for putting these meetings together, and also to Eilanna Price and Marilyn Rueth for serving as hostesses. Wilson will soon be looking for discussion leaders and hostesses for next year’s meetings. If you would like to serve in either role, please e-mail Wilson at wilson3cp@gmail.com.



“Friends of Jane Austen” May 6 at Glendower Historic Mansion

The first of three Summer Gatherings at the Glendower Historic Mansion in Lebanon will be held on Saturday, May 6. Costumed Austen characters will offer readings from Austen’s works along with refreshments, lawn games, and tours of the mansion. The cost is \$20, and advanced ticketing is required. Tickets may be purchased on-line at



wchs@wchsmuseum.org or from the Warren County Historical Society at 513-932-1817.

The two other summer entertainments will be “Reclaiming Our Skills of Old” with craftspeople on June 24-25 and a Civil War encampment September 20-October 1.

The Real Mr. Darcy

As reported in *The Telegraph* of February 9, 2017, a group of academic experts, led by John Sutherland, Lord Norcliffe Emeritus Professor of Modern English Literature and University College London, has determined the likely true appearance of Mr. Darcy. The research was commissioned by the TV station Drama as part of its Jane Austen season. The experts took into account both men whom Jane Austen herself admired, such as Thomas Lefroy and 1st Earl of Morley John Parker; and heartthrobs of the day such as Lord Nelson, the Duke of Wellington, and Leveson Gower.

Mr. Darcy would not have sported a fine tan or broad shoulders. Those were marks of a laborer. He would have had slender, sloping shoulders; though, as a fine horseman, his lower limbs would have been well developed. “His powdered mid-length white hair... would frame a long oval face and small mouth, a long nose, a pointy chin, and a pale complexion.” As a tall man, he would have been about 5’11”.



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