




Letter from the Regional Coordinator

By Lynn Slowden

I am extremely excited and grateful to take on the role of JASNA-Dayton Regional Coordinator. When I volunteered to run, I could never have imagined the world would have changed so much in such a short time!

My career has been spent under the umbrella of “Guest Services,” the arena including sales, hosting and interpretation to visitors. How does one do that with the safety restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic? The Program Committee had planned a year of live events, including a card party, musical evening, traveling lecturer, and another beautiful ball with dinner and dancing. We are now trying to carve a new way of meeting and sharing our love of Jane, but the safety of our members and their families will always be our first concern. Our first online event of the new season, Cocktails & Conversation, was fun! I’m also looking forward to the virtual AGM and seeing new friends I met at my first AGM last year in Williamsburg.

Earlier, as Publicity Coordinator, I sent an email asking you to share what you have been doing during the early extended pause. I received many delightful replies. Stanley Wyllie finished a free course from Hillsdale College on Young Jane Austen and was planning to start another. Linore Burkard finished writing two novels in her new Regency Romance series; the first, *Miss Tavistock’s Mistake* was available for pre-order this spring. Kay Berg was involved in a reading group from her church and they were starting *Tom Jones*. Kathleen (Nalley) Schuller shared photos with me of this fabulous display of Jane Austen in the Garden she did last year as part of “Homespun Holidays” for Wildwood Manor House in Toledo, which drew over 20,000 visitors. Oh, the good old days! 

I’m personally very grateful to outgoing RC Lisa Tyler, who has shared so many things with me. I look forward to having her counsel on the Board. Former RC Carrie Bebris has always encouraged me, ever since my first Dayton meeting. Thank you both!

I would like to send each of you a birthday acknowledgement from your friends at JASNA, but National doesn’t collect our birthdays! Please send me your birthdate. (You don’t have to divulge the year if you don’t want to!) I



promise not to share it; in fact, it is written only in a physical book. If you have program ideas, I'd like to hear them, too. You can send them to rc@jasnadayton.org.

First Cocktails & Conversation A Success!

By Cynthia Manship

Our first Cocktails & Conversation Zoom program was held on Saturday, September 20 at 7:30pm, with yours truly hosting. I was a little nervous hosting a Zoom program for the first time but it came off very well. We had 14 participants attending—one member had never attended a program before! Welcome, Joan!

We started off with Tori showing us how to prepare our featured cocktail, The Salty Dog. This went very well with our discussion of the several versions of *Persuasion* available to view. (Aside to those who are interested: our JASNA-Dayton library may contain several of these to borrow should you wish to do so.) The discussion was lively, and opinions differed on several points. Most of our attendees agreed to a favorite version, the 1995 version with Amanda Root playing Anne. We mainly compared it with the most recent BBC production completed in 2007, though several of our attendees had seen the earlier production done in 1971. (I have seen that version, but it's been many years past. It was done as a mini-series, and as such, is longer than a theatrical release.)

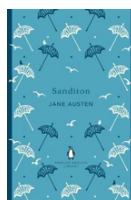
We even, briefly, started to talk about the different versions of *Emma*! I'm hoping we can have that be a future topic at some point (Gee, what would be a good *Emma* cocktail?).

Anyway, we will be having another Cocktails & Conversation next month and we hope you will join us. Carrie Bebris will host, and the topic will be about what we have been reading during our confinement! The date is Sunday, October 25 at 7:30pm so please mark your calendars!

Summer Reading Group

By Wilson Palmer

On August 9, 2020, 15 of us met via Zoom to talk about Jane Austen's fragment *Sanditon*, completions of the fragment by other authors, and PBS's screen version from last winter. I certainly miss the delight of our former, face-to-face meetings. But it had been four months since we discussed Austen and it was great to see friends and hear their insights. Saving on travel time is a benefit, too, I guess, but I would gladly pay the price of traveling to be physically together again.



humor that is displayed, reminding us of her juvenilia. Some noticed there seemed to be more description where conversation could have revealed that information. But they expected if Austen had lived this draft would have been altered. We were amazed that she could delve into hypochondria while suffering under what would prove to be her own mortal illness. One of our participants reminded us how hypochondria is a common theme in Austen, featured in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion*.

With Sanditon's future built on the shifting sands of financial speculation, no one is sure whether Austen intended a happy or disastrous future for the new town. However, those who had read *Sanditon* by "Jane Austen and 'Another Lady'" felt it was a reasonable completion that treated Austen's fragment with integrity, although it moved away from financial commentary into the safer genre of romance. A few had read other completions that they felt were less well done. All who had read Carrie Bebris's *The Suspicion at Sanditon* enjoyed it very much. They agreed that all of Carrie's books are faithful to the personalities of Austen's characters.

On the subject of PBS's *Sanditon* version, all agreed it was a disgrace as a representation of anything Austen. However, most of us commented that we enjoyed the production once we let go of any Austen-related connections. There were plenty of flaws perceived, including unrealistic, ill-mannered behavior between the main love interest and the misused opportunity to deepen the character of Austen's first non-white character. One of us experienced the show via an audio novelization of the series written by Andrew Davies and Kate Riordan.

Some members speculated that perhaps the PBS version purposely flipped Austen-loving viewers' expectations, like an hourglass turned upside down: Sir Edward, the presumptive heir, is wickedly selfish and cruel. Clara is not sweet and charming, but coldly conniving. The best love story is between secondary characters: Lord Babbington, who rather than the playboy he seems at first, actually is an enlightened suitor who marries Esther, even without her fortune. It is Sidney, rather than a female character who is forced to marry for money rather than love. And if there is a second season, Charlotte may wind up with the equally sensible architect who loves her.

Of course, many other thoughts were expressed, but I was too caught up in enjoying the conversations to remember to write down those ideas. Although the Zoom format was less than ideal, even a bad day with Jane Austen is preferable to most other things! And, I had a good day.



Fall Reading Group

By Wilson Palmer

Twelve of us met via Zoom for JASNA-Dayton Reading Group on Sunday afternoon, September 27, 2020. This is the first of eight parts of focusing on Jane Austen's *Emma*. We shared various thoughts and ideas about Chapters 1 through 8. Whether or not *Emma* is your most favorite Austen book, as it is for some, most or all of us recognized

this novel represents Austen at the peak of her career and we are amazed at the multiple layers of meaning that happen throughout this story. Brunswick Square, the Prince Regent, portrait painting, and even the Foundling Hospital are a few examples of these layers.

Emma, I think, would be gratified to know that her character consumed much of our discussion. One person found Emma, especially here at the beginning of the story, insufferable. We suspect this is not an uncommon reaction, especially for first time readers of *Emma*. Emma seems to perceive those around her as pieces in a game to be used as her imagination fancies. More than one person noticed the similarity with the imaginings of Catherine Morland and Emma, although the latter has more independent power of action. But we had to admit that although there is some self-deception, Emma believes that part of her motive is kindness. She lost her mother quite young and her father is more of a child than parent figure, yet she is mistress of the house and the nurturer and guardian of her father. And through it all Emma appears to be genuinely cheerful, loving and kind. She is not very old but is both competent and confident. When Emma and Mr. Knightley argue over Harriet Smith and Robert Martin's proposal, we recognize that Emma is in the wrong, but so is Mr. Knightley when he rejects Emma's wise observation that many men do make imprudent marriages based only on a pretty face and sweet disposition.

Along with Mr. Knightley, other secondary characters were discussed. Was Miss Taylor a good or negligent governess? And is Mr. Knightley wrong and ill-mannered for calling her the latter? As Mrs. Weston now, does she stand up to Mr. Knightley more than she would have before when she was unmarried and almost in the servant class? Why is Mrs. Goddard high enough on the social scale to be invited to Mr. Woodhouse's card parties but not Mr. Perry?

One of our readers pointed out Miss Bates's introduction was full of goodness, happiness, gratitude and universal approbation. What most of us think as her chief attribute, "a great talker upon little matters," was added to the end of a long paragraph on her positive attributes almost as an afterthought. More than one person thought it unusual for Austen to include almost a whole page about the servant James and his daughter Hannah. But perhaps this was more of an example of the kindness of Mr. Woodhouse and the thoughtful management of his daughter.

If you are sorry you missed out on the fun, the next discussion on Chapters 9 through 15 is scheduled for **November 8**.

Chawton in Columbus Update

By Wilson Palmer and Sandi Brennan



The Chawton in Columbus Reading Group has interesting plans for this year. They are reading *Emma* and dividing it into 3 sessions as follows:

October 25, 2020 Volume I

February 28, 2021 Volume II

May 23, 2021 Volume III

The Columbus group was also given an extra “assignment” to be finished by October 25. They are tasked with getting into Emma’s mind by doing what Emma does: *Emma* - Volume 1, Chapter 9, Emma and Harriet “copied riddles into a thin quarto of hot pressed paper, ornamented with cyphers and trophies” and Volume 3 Chapter 7, at the Box Hill picnic, the group was told that Emma “desires either one thing very clever (be it prose or verse, original or repeated) – or two things moderately clever – or three things very dull indeed.” (Although the latter was actually from Frank Churchill’s mind- Wilson)

The assignment therefore was for each person to produce 1-3 items, riddles, poems or whatever. These can be original or something of interest. The items were to be sent to Sandi Brennan by September 30, with the member’s name and author’s name if the item is not original. She then combined them into one document which was returned back to the participants.

The second part of the assignment is to copy or paste these items into each member’s own “quarto” (a quarto-size book is approximately 8 ½ by 11 inches). This could be a notebook already owned, made or purchased. Participants are encouraged to add “cyphers” (ornamental, intertwined initials) and “trophies” (ornamental devices of any kind or pictures, drawings or whatever strikes the fancy).

Participants should share their notebooks at the October Meeting.

Save the Dates!

Dayton Cincinnati Reading Group Future Dates:

Feb. 14, 2021

April 11, 2021

JASNA Dayton Executive Committee

Elected Positions

Regional Coordinator	Lynn Slowden	rc@jasnadayton.org
Program Coordinators	Mary Ann Gasior and Cindy Manship	
	gasiormaryann@yahoo.com and cinlyra@aol.com	
Reading Group Coordinator	Wilson Palmer	wilson3cp@gmail.com
Treasurer	Judy McCoy	mccoyjm@sbcglobal.net
Secretary	Eilanna Price	eilannaesp@yahoo.com
Membership Coordinator	Deb Bentley	937-429-5123 extraone@woh.rr.com
Librarian and Historian	Eilanna Price	eilannaesp@yahoo.com

Appointed Positions

Publicity Coordinator	Lynn Slowden	Lmslowden@aol.com
Fundraising Coordinator	Camilla Mauzy	c.mauzy@hotmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Mariah Busher	jane.sonnet.mb@gmail.com
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