

Letter from the RC

By Lynn Slowden

Wait....it's December?!?

I hope you are better prepared for the holiday season than I am, although we can agree it will be nice to bid 2020 good-bye. We still have two opportunities to get together before New Year's, and I hope you will join me.



Sunday, December 6, at 7:30 p.m. we will meet for our casual, fun **Cocktails & Conversation: *The Holiday Edition***. Enjoy a lively discussion of holidays Jane herself would have celebrated and learn to make an authentic Regency drink.

We are partnering with the Wisconsin Region for our programming again this month. This time our own Carrie Bebris, of the *Mr. & Mrs. Darcy Mystery* series, will discuss various types of Regency men on Saturday, December 12 at 1 p.m. Registration will be through JASNA Wisconsin; I will let you know as soon as we have the links and further information.

In January, we are going to play Bingo! Or maybe it should be "Bingley-O?" Many of us played Jane Austen Bingo at the AGM in October and enjoyed it so much we decided to try it in the Region. One significant change to our event, we wanted to give prizes!

I'm always so impressed with the talents and accomplishments of our members. Former RC Lisa Tyler's latest article, "There's No One Thing That's True: Hemingway Criticism and the Environmental Humanities," has just been published in *The New Hemingway Studies*, edited by Suzanne del Gizzo and Kurt Curnutt. Congratulations, Lisa! Cheri Brinkman is presenting a free virtual program for the Kenton County, Kentucky library on Edwardian Christmas Traditions, December 8 at 6 pm. More information and registration is available at www.kentonlibrary.org. And Damianne Scott, of "Black Girl Loves Jane" will be one of the featured speakers at The Historic Joseph Teel House's Virtual Regency Retreat, January 29-31, 2021. More information and registration details at www.teelhouse.com. (I've already bought my ticket!)

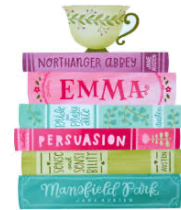
Lastly, I want to thank those of you who responded to my calls for small donations to JASNA Dayton. There is still time to receive the exclusive officially licensed reproduction Jane Austen quilt face mask as a thank you for each \$16. Checks should be made payable to JASNA Dayton, and sent to me, Lynn Slowden, 3775 Saint Andrews Drive, Fairborn Ohio 45324, and I will promptly put your gift in the mail.

Your support of JASNA Dayton and each other, is greatly appreciated. Stay well, and I hope to “see” you soon.

Reading Group

By Wilson Palmer

The Dayton Jane Austen Reading Group met via Zoom on November 8, 2020, where we discussed the second eighth of *Emma*. The theme of the British royal family was continued this month. There was the “sad consequences of... going to South End” (where Princess Caroline was staying), King George III’s love for gruel paralleling the incapacitated figurehead Mr. Woodhouse, and all the intrigue of Mr. Elton’s riddle with its many dark allusions to the Prince Regent. We had two visitors, Diane Reynolds and Arnie Peristein, from outside the Dayton/Cincinnati area that joined us because their Jane Austen club focuses on Austen’s deepest and most secret layers. This section of *Emma*, with the riddles, is an important area for them.



Dark thoughts, indeed, were suggested to us. Did Mr. Knightley purposely miss the Weston wedding because of a previous competition for Miss Taylor’s hand by his brother? Is this part of John Knightley’s resistance to the Christmas party? Does Mr. Woodhouse eat gruel as a cure for syphilis? (Mr. Woodhouse!) Does Mr. Woodhouse’s comic repetition of the beginning of an inappropriately bawdy riddle in front of two young and unmarried women also point toward a darker theoretical cure for that same disease? Is Harriet actually playing Emma, acting dumb to grab as much social advancement as she can?

I rarely consider minor characters like John and Mrs. Knightley. But others had some interesting thoughts. Is he ill-humored at Hartfield because the continuous coddling he receives from his wife at home gets transferred to her father? We see how Mrs. Knightley acts when she returns to her childhood home. Is she different when home in London? I think of gruel as a Dickens thin soup for which Oliver asks for more. One of our food experts says gruel could, during those times, be thought of as a fancy dish.

But, as usual, Emma herself caught the lion’s share of our discussion. At the beginning of Chapter 11, the narrator seems to capture Emma’s thoughts as she turns her attention to the upcoming holiday family visit and “It was no longer in Emma’s power to superintend [Mr. Elton’s] happiness...” An astute reader pointed out the foreshadowing of how much Mr. Elton is depending on Emma for his happiness. There was a long and inconclusive discussion about who Emma is and what are her motivations. Does she take Harriet with her to visit the poor because it is so close to Mr. Elton’s house? Is Emma only performing her duty to help with the plight of the poor, because that is what her social position requires? Or does she feel a genuine compassion for the poor? Is Emma just going through the motions or is Austen trying to say she is a superior Christian creature in many respects? When the author says Emma has never seen the sea, are we supposed to also hear that Emma does not “see”?

Two more discussions this winter, February and April 2021, should take us halfway through the novel. All are welcome and although Zoom is a lower form of life, it does make us accessible, as our distant members and friends have the same travel time as the rest of us.

December Cocktails & Conversation: The Holiday Edition

By Cindy Manship

Greetings JASNA-DAYTON members! Our popular Sunday night informal gathering will continue in December, with *Cocktails & Conversation: The Holiday Edition*, Sunday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m.



Each member of your program committee will be sharing a holiday/feast day that would have been observed during Austen's day. We will learn to make an authentic Regency drink recipe and discuss holidays Jane would have celebrated during her lifetime. Plenty of time to chat about our own holiday traditions, which may look very different this year.

This conversation should be lots of fun so as Lynn said, please join us! And if you would like, below is the recipe for Negus, a popular drink during Regency times, particularly at balls.

Recipe for Negus for one:

- 3 oz port (tawny or ruby) or red wine (consider a tart juice or fruity hot tea for a non-alcoholic option)
- 1 oz fresh lemon juice
- brown sugar (to taste, 1tsp or so)
- hot water (just to top it off)
- nutmeg (for garnish)
- cinnamon stick (for garnish)



Add liquid ingredients & sugar to toddy glass or mug and stir. Then garnish with nutmeg and cinnamon.

Jane Austen's Birthday Celebration to feature presentation by Carrie Bebris: "Gallants, Rakes, and Dandies: A Field Guide to Regency Males"

Saturday, December 12

Zoom log in/social time: 12:30 p.m. Eastern time

Program begins at 1:00 p.m.

Cost: Free

In celebration of Jane Austen's 245th birthday, JASNA-Dayton's own Carrie Bebris, author of the Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Mystery Series, will present her amusing and informative illustrated talk, "Gallants, Rakes, and Dandies: A Field Guide to Regency Males." Travel with one of our favorite speakers as she introduces us to the different types of suitors a young lady might

encounter in Georgian England and learn how to distinguish a bounder from a buck, a rake from a fop, by their habitats and mating calls in this hilarious romp through the world of Regency men.

Last month's "Jane Austen Colonial Thanksgiving" joint event with JASNA-Wisconsin was such a success that we are partnering again with them for this dual-region birthday celebration. Come catch up with old friends and make some new ones!



If you can't attend JASNA-Dayton's Birthday Celebration but still want to see Carrie's presentation . . .

Carrie will be giving her "Gallants, Rakes, and Dandies" talk again on **Sunday, December 13, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at a "Virtual Jane Austen Birthday Tea" hosted by the Dunbarton Colonial House** in Washington, DC. The event, which will take place via Zoom and is open to the public, will start with a 45-minute cooking demonstration in which a Dunbarton staff member will coach attendees through the preparation of their own finger sandwiches and cookies to then enjoy with their tea while Carrie gives her talk. Advance registration is required so attendees can receive the supply list and obtain ingredients. Tickets are \$14 for Dunbarton members/\$16 for nonmembers. For more information, tickets, and registration, visit <https://dumbartonhouse.ticketleap.com/virtual-jane-austen-birthday-tea/>

Jane Austen Bingo!!

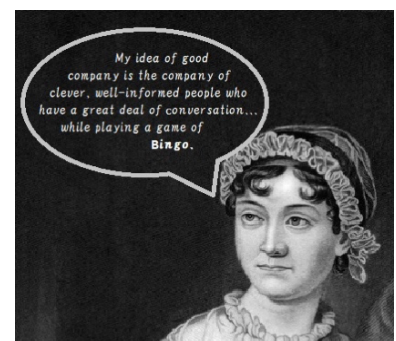
By Lynn Slowden

Join us Sunday, January 17 at 2 p.m on Zoom for some Jane Austen Bingo!

Lisa Brown, from the JASNA Central and Western NY Region, designed a fun Bingo game (based on Jane Austen's six novels and the Juvenilia) which some of us played during the Virtual AGM in October. It's easy and fast-paced yet will test your recall of the many characters in each of the novels. The game is limited to 30 players, so register as soon as we send the information!

To participate, you will need to be able to join us on Zoom and download and print your assigned bingo cards in advance. Collect a group of items to use as markers on the card, since we will use each card more than once. Buttons, M&Ms, and jellybeans all work well as long as you can keep track.

HOLDERS of the winning bingo card in each game will receive a prize, mailed to your home after the event. I'm looking forward to this – we laughed a lot! If we have an overwhelming response, we can schedule another game, so don't hesitate to register if you'd like to try it. Mark your calendars and watch for the invitation!



February Cocktails & Conversation: Favorite and Least Favorite Couples from Jane Austen
By Tori Manship

Love (and possibly disgust?!) will be in the air as we gather for another delightful Cocktails & Conversation event Sunday, February 7th at 7:30 p.m.

I will be leading our discussion of our favorite (and least favorite) Jane Austen couples, as well as doing my usual bartending duties. I'm looking forward to a passionate discussion that includes both Jane Austen's wonderful novels and the many Austen-inspired film adaptations of her work with all of you!



Stay tuned for our February Cocktail recipe but expect something sweet and delicious!