

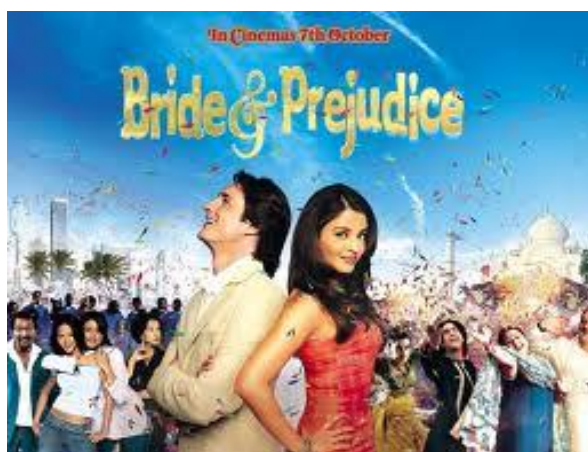
# Dayton JASNA

[www.jasnadayton.org](http://www.jasnadayton.org)

April 2013

## ***Bride and Prejudice: Austen Colonized?* May 4 at the Kettering Moraine Library**

On Saturday May 4, JASNA Dayton member Veena Kasbekar will present a program on *Bride and Prejudice*, a film many of us enjoyed for its dizzying mix of Austen plot elements with a colorful chaos of Indian characters, culture, song and dance. Using scenes from the film, Veena will attempt to answer a difficult question: does the movie retain Austen's spirit and wit, set as it is against the backdrop of a Bollywood extravaganza, or does it pollute the shades of Pemberley?



The cultural mix came naturally to the film's director, Gurinder Chadha, a woman of Indian parentage born in Nairobi and living in London. Veena likewise is well placed to elucidate the English and Indian elements in the film. Educated in Mumbai and the U.S, Dr. Kasbekar is professor of English at Ohio University-Chillicothe. Her long-ago dissertation was on English women writers from 1660-1820. She has loved Austen and Mr. Darcy since she was twelve years old.

Veena hopes attendees will have the time to view the movie itself before the presentation so that we can have a lively discussion on it.

**Time:** Saturday, May 4, 2:00-4:30 (Gathering from 1:30 on, but hot water for tea expected to be ready by 2:00)

**Place:** Kettering Moraine Branch of Dayton Metro Libraries (3496 Far Hills Avenue, Kettering 45429), in the meeting room on the right as you enter the front door. Parking and entrance are behind the building. Enter the lot from Far Hills using the alley on the south side of the building.

**Cost:** Free!

**Refreshments:** Hot water, plates, and napkins will be provided, along with sweetener, milk, and stirrers. Bring your own tea (or other beverage) and cup. Also please bring finger food to pass.

**RSVP:** Please let Meredith know if you are planning to come, at [stoeha@yahoo.com](mailto:stoeha@yahoo.com) or 937-434-7567.

## JASNA Dayton Executive Committee

Regional Coordinator, Reading Group	Jean Long	937-287-6919	<a href="mailto:jtrnlong@aol.com">jtrnlong@aol.com</a>
Secretary	Mariah Busher		
Treasurer	Martha Caprarotta		
Program	Carrie Bebris		
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Webmaster	Tom Tumbusch		

### Election of Officers Scheduled for May Meeting

In the past, the only elective office on JASNA Dayton's Executive Council has been the Regional Coordinator (RC), a position defined in the bylaws of the national organization. The RC serves up to three consecutive terms of two years each. All the other members of the Executive Council have been appointed. Our new bylaws, approved by the membership at the December 2012 meeting, require all Executive Council members to be elected for two year terms. The first such election will take place at the May meeting. The slate of candidates matches the list of Executive Council members above, with two exceptions. Since Jean Long was elected RC at the September 2012 meeting she is not up for reelection this year. Our Treasurer, Martha Caprarotta, has decided to step down after a great many years of service to our organization. She will be replaced on the slate of proposed officers by Judy McCoy. For articles on Martha and Judy, see pages 5 and 6.

## **Last Reading Group Meeting of the Year April 14**

On **April 14, 2013** the Reading Group will meet as usual at Jean Long's home from 2:30 to 4:30. We will be discussing *Sense and Sensibility*, Volume I, Chapters 19-22 and Volume II, Chapters 1-3 (or Chapters 19-25 for those whose editions are not divided into volumes), which will introduce us to several new characters—the Palmers and the Steeles—and bring us up to Mrs. Jennings' invitation for Elinor and Marianne to spend the winter in London.

Jean lives at 927 Far Hills (Route 48), Oakwood, 45419. Her condominium backs onto Far Hills, so to enter, turn onto Park Avenue (left if you're going north on Far Hills, right if you're going south), and turn left almost immediately, just before the municipal building. (The street says "City cars only.") You'll be on an alley that leads to the parking lot of Bob and Jean's building. A sidewalk runs between 2 sections of the complex. Facing Far Hills, Jean's condominium is on the right. For questions, call Jean at 927-287-6919 or e-mail [jtrnlong@aol.com](mailto:jtrnlong@aol.com).

## **First Meeting of Next JASNA Year Set for September 15**

Plans are well under way for our first meeting of the next JASNA season, to be held on Sunday, September 15. Victoria Hinshaw, well-known to JASNA members as an expert on English Great Houses and abbeys, will present a talk "From Northanger Abbey to Downton Abbey," explaining the history of abbeys and other religious houses in Britain, and how, after the Dissolution of Monasteries by Henry VIII, many of them were converted into private homes (such as the fictional Northanger Abbey and Downton Abbey).



The meeting will be held at Normandy United Methodist Church, a venue particularly suited to the topic. Normandy Church began as a private home built in the Medieval English Manor style and incorporating architectural antiques imported from old European buildings--very much the type of building Victoria Hinshaw will be talking about, except that it started as a home and ended as a church instead of the other way around. The meeting will, we hope, include a tour of the building, and it will also feature an elegant tea catered by our favorite Dayton tea room, Central Perc.

Be sure to save the date for this very special meeting.

## March 23 Meeting on Lending Library

Our March 23 program, “Meet Your JASNA Dayton Lending Library,” proved a delightful way to spend an afternoon. Meeting in the antique-filled home of Librarian Toni Tumbusch and Webmaster Tom Tumbusch, we found the library displayed on all available surfaces around the house. The biggest hit was the handsome set of *Jane Austen’s Regency World* magazines. The tea and desserts were delicious, but the best part of the afternoon was the



**Bingley welcomes guests**

many lively conversations that took place in the very pleasant atmosphere created by our hosts.

We outstayed the allotted meeting time by a considerable amount. Many thanks to Tom and Toni and their loyal companion Bingley for opening their home to us for this event.



**Toni checks out books from the Lending Library**



**Guests chat, eat, and admire Bingley**

## Martha Caprarotta Resigns as Treasurer

Next year will be the first in our 28 year history that JASNA Dayton will face without founding member Martha Caprarotta in a leadership role. When I joined the group nearly twenty years ago (in response to a flyer Martha had left off at a showing of *Persuasion* in Yellow Springs), Martha was running the organization almost single handed. She put together all the programs. She was librarian, historian, newsletter editor, publicity director, fund raiser, and treasurer. The only posts she wasn't filling were membership coordinator and RC. The sound financial position JASNA Dayton enjoys today is due to Martha's fundraising projects. She made, and continues to make, the porcelain brooches with Jane's silhouette to sell locally and at JASNA events. Over the years she has put on several galas, some multi-day and multi-venue events, which raised money for JASNA Dayton and also attracted many new members to the group.

During the past few years Martha has handed off her responsibilities one by one, so that a sizable Executive

Committee is performing the work she used to do alone.

The last meeting she planned, the December 2012 fashion show at the Golden Lamb, was, by general agreement, one the best we have ever had. We are very sorry to see Martha relinquishing her last office and hope to see her back when retirement from her real job may leave her with more leisure time.



Martha and Jane at UD



Dancing with Kathleen Nealeigh at May 2010 Gala

## **Judy McCoy Accepts Treasurer Position**

Judy's background, in her own words:

I retired from the Air Force after 40 years. I was a civilian logistician, which is how I met Deb Bentley, who introduced me to JASNA. Thanks, Deb. She tried to get me to join maybe 10 years ago, but life in the form of 3 kids, a husband, and two very large families intervened. About 5 years ago, I started with the reading group, when we were reading *Mansfield Park*.



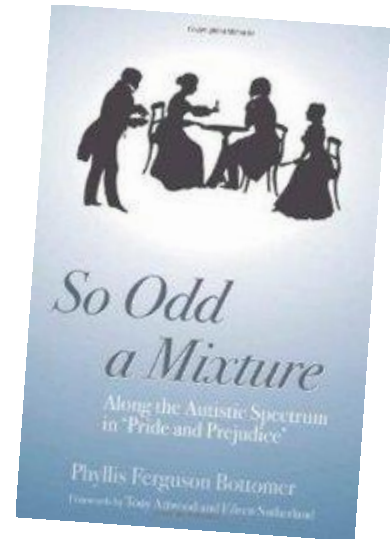
Probably my most enduring hobby, if you can call it that – maybe compulsion would be a better term – is reading. Having lived in France for 3 years at an impressionable age, and having toured the castles, chateaux, museums, and cathedrals of Europe during that period, I have a keen interest in history. However, since I'm a little lazy, I prefer my history in the form of historical novels. Over the years, I've focused on many themes – history of England, the crusades, the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Regency period, etc. At one point, I re-read *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*. That led to reading the rest of Jane's novels. I was captured, and ready to accept Deb's invitation. I really enjoy both the reading group and the general meetings.

### ***Teverton Hall*, from Lending Library**

One of the books I took out from the Lending Library at the March meeting was *Teverton Hall* by Jane Gillespie. I had read a couple of her novels before and enjoyed them. Among other kinds of books, including books for children, Jane Gillespie wrote Austen sequels very much in keeping with the character of the originals. (Another book I checked out, which shall be nameless, is a straight Regency romance—an uncomfortable mix of perfectly valid information about early 19<sup>th</sup> century dress, activities, and occupations; of 1950ish dating conventions; and of more recent notions about the degree of self sufficiency appropriate to a young lady.) *Teverton Hall* was interesting to me because it featured the Collins family. I am fond of Charlotte and always like to see how she comes out. In this book, her two teenage children break loose from the constant embarrassment their father has visited upon the family. Thanks to the forbearance she has learned from the cradle, daughter Marcia listens kindly during a ball as the heir to the local manor talks about his horse, thereby winning his heart. (Jane Austen herself had no patience with young men who talked to her about their horses.) William Junior, having heard all of his life of the wonderful inheritance that awaits the family upon the Mr. Bennet's demise, escapes to Longborn where finds his true calling in helping to run the estate.

## Autism in Austen

A book in our JASNA Dayton Lending Library that caught my eye, though I did not go so far as to take it out, was *So Odd a Mixture; Along the Autistic Spectrum in "Pride and Prejudice"* by Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer. Seeking a review of it on the web, I came across this article at [austenblog.com/2007/04/08/the-doctor-will-see-you-now-mr-collins/](http://austenblog.com/2007/04/08/the-doctor-will-see-you-now-mr-collins/)



Alert Janeites Lisa and Cathy sent us a link to an article in the *Telegraph* with more information about *So Odd a Mixture*, the book that claims several characters in *Pride and Prejudice* suffer from various psychological conditions....Phyllis Ferguson Bottomer, a speech pathologist in Canada, analyses eight characters from Austen's classic novel, in a book that teachers are being encouraged to use to liven up GCSE (General Certificate in Secondary English) English lessons.

[Ms. Bottomer] argues that five characters from the Bennet family, and three from the Fitzwilliam clan, have fundamental difficulties with communication and empathy. [Her book] provides an explanation for some characters' awkward behaviour at crowded balls, their frequent silences or the tendency to lapse into monologues rather than truly converse with others, she said. Mr. Darcy's "unaccountable rudeness" can be blamed on "high-functioning autism or Asperger's syndrome," which Austen wrote about without knowing what it was, it is claimed.

...Miss Bottomer quotes Austen's description of Mr. Collins – "awkward and solemn, apologising instead of attending, and often moving wrong without being aware of it". The author says it epitomises "some of the co-ordination problems those on the autistic spectrum can have". Mr. and Mrs Bennet, the squabbling couple, are also said to be sufferers. Lydia, the heroine's younger sister, is described as having attention deficit disorder....

However, the campaign to use the book for GCSEs seems to have hit a bit of a snag. The book, which the publishers hope will be used to provoke debate in schools, was dismissed by the National Association for the Teaching of English as "wonderfully absurd".

Reading further on the blog I came across an interesting alternative explanation for Mr. Darcy's initial failure to appreciate Elizabeth Bennet's good looks: perhaps he was nearsighted. The same blog directed the reader to an insightful psychological analysis of another popular classic, *Winnie the Pooh*, with stress on the medications that might make all the characters' lives more happy and productive, at <http://www.lavasurfer.com/100akerpathology.pdf>.



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