

Greater Dayton JASNA

April 2010

It's Time to Register for the May 15 Gala!

The final schedule for our JASNA District's **25th Anniversary Gala** is now available. The morning program takes place at the University of Dayton Sears Recital Hall on the ground floor of the Jesse Philips Humanities Center, and the afternoon program, from luncheon on, takes place in the Kennedy Union Ballroom.

Martha Caprarotta, who formed the group 26 years ago (it was a year before they discovered and joined the national organization), did nearly all the work of putting this gala together, and we thank her for her constant efforts on behalf of our District throughout the years, and on this special occasion.

Note especially that **Jane Austen Books** is coming from Cleveland. They will have an emporium of Austen-related merchandise and books for sale in the Kennedy Union Ballroom, including those written by our guest speakers.



9:00-- Registration, coffee and bagels served. Sign up for your table for the luncheon. Time permitting, you can walk over to the Kennedy Union Ballroom and browse the **Jane Austen Books Emporium**, which will be setting up.

9:50-- Welcome Remarks

10:00-- Laura Voracheck, Assistant Professor of English, University of Dayton, speaks on "The Nineteenth-Century Piano," the social history of the instrument and amateur female performance in the early 19th Century, with images of 19th century pianos and piano instruction manuals. (Laura's is shown above, with Meredith and Martha (L to R.)

10:50-- Sarah Cavender, Dayton Bach Society soprano, sings songs from the classical and Regency era, including Mozart's "Voi Che Sapete," the song Elizabeth Bennet sings to a smitten Mr. Darcy at Pemberley in the 1995 film version of *Pride and Prejudice*. Sarah is a recent graduate of Northmont High School and current student at Sinclair Community College, as well as a Jane Austen fan.

11:10--Break

11:20--Carrie Bebris, author of the award-winning Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Mystery series, presents “You Pierce My Soul,” a novelist’s perspective on how Austen uses letters exchanged between her characters to build her stories

12:10--Photos at the Jane Austen bust outside Humanities Center and walk to Kennedy Union

12:30--High Tea Luncheon

Finger sandwiches (chicken salad, egg salad, cucumber), raisin scones with clotted cream, deli cocktail sandwiches (mini brioche filled with roast beef, ham, turkey), mini vanilla cream puffs, chocolate truffles, chocolate covered strawberries, homemade lemon tea cookies, hot teas.

1:45--Kim Wilson, author of *Tea with Jane Austen* and *In the Garden with Jane Austen*, gives an illustrated presentation “Love in the Shrubbery: In the Garden with Jane Austen.”

2:35--Autograph session/informal discussion with authors, Kim and Carrie. You may bring your own books, or purchase them at the Jane Austen Books Emporium.

3:30-- English Country Dance workshop with Tom and Toni Tumbush, dance masters from the Cincinnati English Country Dancers. They will be presenting a dance that Jane Austen knew and loved, and likely danced herself. (See following article for details.)



5:00-- Gala ends

Parking is Free! You can park for free at the University of Dayton in C lot on Saturday, May 18. No permit needed. Lot C is next to the Eugene Kettering Engineering building and just a few steps from the Jesse Philips Humanities Center, where the Gala's morning program will be held. Here's a link to UD's Map of the campus <http://map.udayton.edu>. The best way to get to Lot C is either take Irving Ave and turn onto Evanston, which becomes Founders Lane and ends at Lot C; or take Brown Street and turn east onto Kiefaber, and turn left when it deadends at Founders Lane. (Don't take the main entrance to UD at Brown and Stewart because there is no direct way from there to Lot C.)

To Register: Contact Meredith Stoehr at stoeha@yahoo.com or (937)-434-7567 for a registration form, or just send a check (\$35 for JASNA members; \$40 for non-JASNA members) with your information (name, address, phone, and e-mail) to Meredith at 86 Carmel Court, Centerville, OH 45458. Also contact Meredith for any questions you may have about the Gala.

Volunteers Needed for Gala

If you are willing to help out in one of the following roles, please contact Martha Caprarotta at mdcaprarotta@msn.com or call her at 937-836-2408 evenings.

Before the Event (Dayton Region will reimburse all costs):

- Volunteer is needed to make name tags (Martha has Jane Austen template that can be used)
- Volunteer is needed to purchase the bagels and cream cheese and bring to Sears Hall by 8:30 a.m.
- Volunteer needed to put together a door prize (possibly from items from JA Books and our author speakers) and determine how it will be awarded

Day of event:

Before program starts (you would need to be at the Sears Recital Hall by 8:30 a.m.)

- Greet people at door and Direct people to Registration table, restroom, recital hall
- Registration table (check people in, hand out name tags and programs)
- Coffee & Bagels table (serve, cleanup)
- Sell our brooches (until events start)
- General assistance (put up signs on doors, help bringing in items, etc.)

Throughout the day:

- Photographers needed to take pictures of all events and of people in front of the Jane Austen bust for our newsletter and upcoming web page
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Reading Group to Meet Sunday, May 2

After a March meeting at Gary Mitchner's house, and an April meeting in the elegant eighteenth century parlor of the Stones' home in Greenville, the Reading Group returns to Jean Long's home for the last meeting of the year. We will be discussing the last four chapters of *Persuasion* and comparing the published ending with Austen's earlier version, which is preserved in manuscript form.

At this meeting we will also be selecting the book to study next year. The selection has become rather narrow. Of the major novels, we have only *Sense and Sensibility* and *Emma* remaining. As usual, the Reading Group will meet at 2:30. Jean's home is at 927 Far Hills Avenue in Oakwood. If you have any question about how to get there, or you do not have a copy of the alternative ending to *Persuasion*, contact Jean at jtrnlong@aol.com or (937)-298-0436.

Rediscovering a Dance from Jane's Time



In early January of this year, BBC Radio 4 aired a program called “Jane Austen’s iPod,” which revealed some of the music found in her personal collection. The timing was appropriate, for nine previously uncatalogued volumes of Austen family music had recently been entrusted to Chawton House Library, joining eight others already in the collection.

One of the tunes featured in this program was a dance set to a Scottish tune called “Donald O’Creedy.” At the bottom of the page was a shorthand description of the dance, which, while incomprehensible to some, quickly tells a student of 18th Century Dance how the figures are performed.

Donald O’Creedy isn’t a common dance among today’s English Country Dance enthusiasts, but our own Tom Tumbusch has managed to locate the tune and reconstruct this lively, easy-to-learn piece from the description given in the BBC program. He and his wife Toni have already tried it out on their local dance group to work out the kinks, and will unveil it at the Dayton JASNA Gala on May 15, 2010 as part of their workshop on dances from Jane’s time. We hope you’ll join us in bringing this delightful dance back to life. If you’ve never danced before, fear not! Many of the dances that Jane enjoyed are easy to learn, and Tom and Toni make it almost as simple as walking.

Program Committee Seeks Ideas for Next Year

The Program Committee is looking for program ideas for next year. If you have an idea about a presenter, a topic, or a venue, please contact our Program Chair, Carrie Bebris at cbebris@carriebebris.com or (937)-436-3716.

Lisa Tyler Retires as E-Newsletter Chair

After many years’ service, Lisa has given up her position as E-Newsletter Chair. We thank her for all the excellent e-newsletters she produced to keep us up to date with District activities, community activities of interest to Janites, and news about Austen books and movies and other events.

Beautiful Program on “Beautiful Lace”

Tim and Kathleen Nealeigh’s February 28 program on lace making was a delight. Kathleen introduced the subject by summarizing references to lace in Austen’s work. Lace making is one of the female accomplishments that Austen finds unproductive. Her heroines do not make lace; Lady Bertram spends nearly all her time on it. An excessive interest in lace among her characters is generally a sign of vanity or pride. Mrs. Elton is “as elegant as lace and pearls could make her,” while Emma had very little lace even in her wedding dress.

Tim exhibited four types of lace and showed how each is made, while Kathleen introduced each variety by reading a pertinent passage from Austen. Tim is accustomed to demonstrating his craft to individuals passing by his booth at fairs and exhibitions. For our group, he crafted large-scale models using rope instead of thread to demonstrate the various knots required, an extra effort which we appreciate.



Two of the lace-making techniques are simple enough to be practiced by amateurs. Knotting (or tating), Lady Bertram’s main occupation, produces strings with knots in them, which could be used for fringes, sewed onto clothing for decoration, or constructed into larger designs. Netting, enumerated in *Pride and Prejudice* among the arts of the accomplished lady, can produce purses, mitts, or collars, some of them very lovely.

The other two types of lace Tim discussed, needle lace and bobbin lace, require a professional hand. They would be worn, but not created by, the wealthier Austen characters. Needle lace progresses at about an inch a week. Lace makers worked in unheated rooms so that smoke would not soil the lace, often in damp cellars to keep the thread pliant, with special lamps—globes of water surrounding a candle—to illuminate their work. It is no wonder that lace was enormously expensive, and heavily taxed and regulated.

Washing lace was also very difficult. Ladies kept their lace in cornmeal to absorb any grease and had it washed only every couple years. To dry a piece of netting, it was necessary to pin every loop, a job that could take all day for a large piece.

Tim, obviously a man of great patience, is adept at all these types of lace making. He was a French teacher for 38 years (hence his persona “The Arrogant Frenchman”), and he fell in love with lace in Brussels, on his first field trip with a class to the continent.

Stones' House a Labor of Love for the Eighteenth Century

Tom and Myrna Stone live in Greenville, about 60 miles northwest of Dayton, in a house built in 1761 by Daniel Thornton in Johnston, Rhode Island. They bought the house from a builder in Maine who buys old houses, dismantles them (numbering the pieces), and sells them with rudimentary instructions and sketches to guide the new owner in putting them back together again. The house is a typical dwelling for a prosperous, but not wealthy, citizen of mid-eighteenth century New England. It has ten rooms, five upstairs and five down, with the unobtrusive addition of plumbing, heating, air conditioning, and electricity.

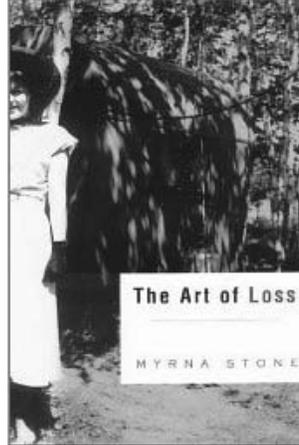


One can only begin to imagine the work and care that went into putting the house together so beautifully with such major modifications. Tom says that when he first saw the house it was in a field under a tarp, looking like a pile of debris ready for a bonfire. Among the original parts of the house are the bricks in the central chimney (Tom says he spent one summer chipping old mortar off 3500 bricks), the 8 x 8 inch oak posts that frame the house, the granite steps, the floorboards, five fireplaces, a good deal of the molding and some bookshelves, and some hardware, like hinges. The shingles, siding, and windows had to be replaced with modern materials. So faithful were the Stones to their period that they used replica nails, at 25 cents apiece, for the reconstruction.

The house is furnished entirely with eighteenth century antiques, and every room is beautifully arranged. Tom (I was on Tom's tour, so I do not know what Myrna told her group) had many stories to tell about his acquisitions. He and Myrna go to sales, of course, and know most vendors around the country, but they also acquire many pieces on e-Bay. Tom has gathered two sets of matching chairs, one with eight and one with fourteen pieces, a few at a time, mostly over e-Bay. The walls are richly decorated with prints, needlework, and some paintings, one of which may well be the only painting of a Colonial governor of New Hampshire. The heavy mirror over the dining room mantle is particularly prized, the heavy glass having survived now over 250 years. The silver candlesticks and tableware are something to behold. Even all the glassware in the house is eighteenth century, and it is in daily use.

Our scheduled Reading Group was held in the parlor and accompanied by a fine tea. It was a lively discussion—we came almost to blows over the question whether Lady Russell really was

looking at curtains instead of Captain Wentworth as she and Anne walked down the street in Bath, or whether she actually did see Captain Wentworth but didn't like to say so. A highlight of the day was Marilyn Rueth's reading selection. Bypassing Jane entirely, she read a lovely and thought-provoking poem from Myrna's book *The Art of Loss* (Michigan State University Press, 2001). Besides taking care of her demanding house, Myrna is a successful poet. She has a second book in print, *How Else to Love the World*, with a third, *The Cassanova Chronicles*, to come out this summer. These books are (or will be) available on Amazon.



Carrie Bebris to Appear at Literary Picnic in Columbus



Having launched her fifth Mr. and Mrs. Darcy mystery, *The Intrigue at Highbury*, in March, Carrie has a couple more appearances scheduled in the area. She will be guest author for the **James Thurber House and Museum Summer Literary Picnic** in Columbus on Wednesday, June 30. For further information call the Thurber Museum at (614)-464-1032 or consult their website at <http://www.thurberhouse.com/events/events.html>. That sounds like a delightful event, as elegant as a Box Hill picnic.

Antioch Writers' Workshop Starts Saturday, July 10

Like the Dayton Region of JASNA, the Antioch Writers' Workshop in Yellow Springs is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Also this year they are introducing "a la carte" registration, to encourage attendance from people who can't devote a whole week to the workshop. The Saturday program is a standalone event with morning and evening keynote talks and three breakout sessions. It looks like an enticing opportunity for readers as well as writers. **Carrie Bebris** will give the morning keynote talk and lead the fiction breakout groups on Saturday. Carrie and District member **Judy DaPolito** are both active in organizing and promoting the Writers' Workshop. For more information check the website www.antiochwritersworkshop.com or call (937) 475-7357.



Inside:

Register Now for Gala Saturday, May 15 at UD

- ***Sign Up to Volunteer***
- ***Dance from Austen Notebook to Premiere***
- ***Jane Austen Books Emporium of Cleveland***

Sunday, May 2 Reading Group Meeting

Wednesday, June 30, Carrie Bebris in Columbus

Starting Saturday, July 10—Antioch Writers' Workshop

Reports on February and April Meetings

Call for Program Ideas for Next Year