

# Dayton Region JASNA

November 2010

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## **Celebrate Jane's Birthday Saturday, December 4, at the Cincinnati Art Museum**

This year we will toast Jane's birthday on Saturday, December 4, at the Cincinnati Art Museum. We will enjoy a private guided tour of the exhibit *Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman*, followed by lunch at the museum cafe. The exhibit celebrates the restoration of the Museum's own splendid Gainsborough portrait of Ann Ford, later Mrs. Phillip Thicknesse. It features sixteen Gainsborough portraits in all, as well as representative costumes of the late eighteenth century. The exhibit will travel on to San Diego after it closes in Cincinnati at the end of the year.

### Schedule

Meet between 11:00 (when the Museum opens) and 11:30 in the foyer  
Docent-guided tour 11:30-12:30  
Luncheon in the Terrace Cafe 12:30  
Continue to explore this fine museum on your own. Closing time is 5:00

For an after lunch activity Marilyn and Toni recommend another exhibit at the museum, *Wedded Perfection: Two Centuries of Wedding Gowns*, which runs through January.

Cost: Museum admission and the exhibit are free. We will order lunch from the menu and pay with separate checks. Parking is free for museum members and for those who spend \$10 or more at the cafe (just request a "double receipt" when paying your cafe bill). Otherwise, parking is \$4.

Location: 953 Eden Park Drive in Cincinnati. The phone number is (513) 639-2995.

RSVP and Special Accommodations: We need know about how many members will be attending so that the Museum can provide the right number of docents for our tour. Please RSVP to Meredith at [stoeha@yahoo.com](mailto:stoeha@yahoo.com) or 937-434-7567. If you need special accommodations of any sort, please include that information in your RSVP as well.

Car Pooling: If anybody in Dayton would like to have a ride to the Museum or is willing to drive someone else, please include that information in your RSVP, and I (Meredith) will coordinate drivers and passengers.

Dress: Many of our members plan to attend in their Regency finery.



## Dayton Region JASNA Officers

Area Coordinator	Gary Mitchner	937-299-1663	gary.mitchner@gmail.com
Reading Group	Jean Long	937-298-0436	jtrnlong@aol.com
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Treasurer	Martha Caprarotta		
Program	Carrie Bebris		
Webmaster	Tom Tumbusch		

### **JASNA Library Now on Website**

A not-so-well-known fact is that our Chapter has a library. Our new librarian, Toni Tumbusch, has put the full catalog on our Region's website ([www.jasnadayton.org](http://www.jasnadayton.org)), along with a link to use for obtaining a book or movie from the library. Toni has also put up a wish list on the site, of donations that would be particularly welcome. The library includes a nice set of BBC versions of Austen's works, but they are all on VCR tape. It would be good to replace them with DVD versions, and we also need DVD versions of the newer productions. So if anyone has duplicates, Toni would be glad to have them.

### **New Dues Policy**

The annual Membership mailing will be coming out very soon. We will be offering a two-tiered dues structure this year: \$10 for basic Region membership and \$15 for Region membership with paper newsletter. The newsletter will be posted on the Website ([www.jasnadayton.org](http://www.jasnadayton.org)), and members will be notified when it appears there. We are hoping that some of the dues money that has in the past gone for photocopying and mailing can be redirected to paying our monthly internet provider fee.

## Enjoyable September Meeting with Kristopher Shultz

Everyone at our September meeting at [Basically British](#) pronounced it a particular success. The hosts and the atmosphere were charming, the refreshments delicious, and the speaker most lively and interesting. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Kristopher Shultz is a policeman, but he is equally at home in Colonial and early Federal America. Set him down at any date—say 1805—and he would know exactly what to wear, and do, and talk about.



Kristopher is a member of the [George Rogers Clark Heritage](#) Association, which puts on the Fair at New Boston in Springfield each year. He is chair of their War of 1812 Committee. He told us that during the upcoming bicentennial celebrations the Fair will add an extra five years to its usual time span 1790-1810, to encompass wares, costumes, and entertainments up to 1815. As a non-re-enactor, I was amazed to learn that exhibitors at the Fair are subject to a jury that can discern whether an artifact is in scope for 1810-1815 but pitifully anachronistic for 1805. Kristopher told us that the presenters celebrate the end of the fair with a rousing night at the tavern, drinking beer, debating political hot topics, and singing popular songs to fiddle accompaniment, all in period. It sounds delightful, but daring. Imagine the embarrassment of striking up a tune that wasn't written until 1820!

Carrie Bebris met Kristopher at the Fair when she was writing *Matters at Mansfield*. She was stuck on a problem involving dueling pistols, and found Kristopher in his booth selling black powder arms. He answered her question and a great deal more besides. He has become her regular source of information on nineteenth century weapons and ballistics, and in turn he has added eighteenth and nineteenth century criminology to his long list of interests.

As shown in the picture, Kristopher came to our meeting attired as a Captain of Militia, with one epaulet, a gorget, a red sash that could double as a stretcher, and, best of all, a hat with a bearskin crest. His uniform is the same as that of the King's New Brunswick Regiment of Canada—during the War of 1812, he says, the British tied white cloths around their arms so their Indian allies could distinguish them from the American enemy.

Being a re-enactor, Kristopher says, provides a lot of insight into why and how things happened in the past. The weight of rifles and handguns is important, as is the length of time it takes to load them. The feel of the clothes in hot or cold or rainy weather is important, and the comfort and durability of footwear. Living the eighteenth or nineteenth century lifestyle for days on end lets us reenter a world where the speed of travel and communication was limited by the speed of a horse. Re-enacting might be called experimental history.

## Reading Group Off to Strong Start

Eighteen people attended our first Reading Group meeting of the year, where we began our two year perusal of *Emma*. As our leader Jean Long pointed out, this is Jane's longest, most mature, and most complex work. Jane began it in January, 1814, less than four years before her death. During the time *Emma* was written, the Napoleonic wars came to an end, and in Jane's own family circle, her sister in law Fanny died, and her mother's health declined. Perhaps *Emma*'s situation mirrors something of Jane's own daily round of catering to an invalid parent.



Our discussion reflected the usual conflicts in interpreting *Emma*'s character. Is she likable? Unlikable? Silly? Just young? Too class conscious? Normally class conscious for her time? Is it true that she has had "very little to vex her"? If any of us were a lively young woman confined to a small village and caring for a sickly parent, would we feel vexed?

Jean passed out a list of things to note as we read *Emma*:

- List *Emma*'s prejudices
- Make two lists of *Emma*'s traits, one for good traits and one for bad.
- Trace the occasions when *Emma* misreads Mr. Elton, Frank, and Jane
- List the occurrences of the words "Resource" and "Blunder"
- List phrases you would like to have on a T-shirt

And for those who like to stay competitive in Austen trivia contests:

- What is Mr. Woodhouse's first name?
- What colors are part of one of Mrs. Elton's reticules?

Our schedule for the rest of the season, which is also posted on our Website, is:

January 9, 2011	Vol I, Chapters 8-14
February 13, 2011	Vol. I, Chapters 15-18; Vol. II, Chapters 1-4
April 10, 2011	Vol. II, Chapters 5-9

Reading Group meetings begin at 2:30 and are usually held at Jean Long's home. For details consult our web page or contact Jean at (937)-298-0436 or [jtrnlong@aol.com](mailto:jtrnlong@aol.com).

## Save Date for Cleveland Gala in the Spring

The Ohio North Coast JASNA Region, according to Carrie inspired somewhat by our Gala last May, is planning their own Gala for April 16, 2011. Arrangements are not yet complete, but they have secured Tim Bullamore, publisher of *Jane Austen's Regency World* magazine, as a speaker. He is an award-winning journalist for the *London Telegraph* and an expert in the art of obituary writing. He'll combine both these interests in his talk "Remembering Jane Austen." Carrie hopes that we can get a good-sized group together to support this Gala.



## Did Jane Write Her Works All By Herself?

In the last couple years our Jane's novels have been inhabited by zombies and sea monsters. Now Oxford professor Kathryn Sutherland has introduced another presence—that of the editor who improved upon Jane's naive attempts at spelling and punctuation. Professor Sutherland has examined and posted on line 1000 pages of Jane's manuscripts including letters, some story fragments, and so on—not, of course the six great novels, whose manuscripts are lost. A *Guardian* article (23 October 2010, by Maev Kennedy) gives an overview of her case:

“... much of the credit for her elegant prose must go to publisher's reader and editor William Gifford....[who] polished up Austen's manuscripts, smoothing out the style, regularising the punctuation, introducing the famous exquisitely placed semicolons and eliminating her blizzards of dashes...."Does it make her less of a genius?" said Professor Kathryn Sutherland of the English language and literature faculty at Oxford University. "I don't think so," she said.... "Indeed I think it makes her more interesting, and a much more modern and innovative writer than had been thought. Her style is much more intimate and relaxed, more conversational," said Sutherland...." She uses capital letters and underlining to emphasise the words she thinks important, in a manner that takes us closer to the speaking voice than the printed page. In taking them away, it becomes more grammatical and sophisticated – but something has been lost."

Gary brought a two page letter to the Reading Group from a correspondent in England who wondered what we in America make of the controversy. Jean had discussed it with leading Austen scholars at the AGM last month, who dismiss Professor Sutherland's arguments out of hand. Spelling and punctuation in Jane's day were on their way to standardization, but the standards had not yet come into universal use. As an amateur genealogist, I have read quite a few handwritten legal documents from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The favorite punctuation mark was certainly the dash, which was probably easier to write with a quill than periods or commas. Capitalization of nouns was common and spelling was phonetic. Sutherland's point that dashes and odd capitalization is "modern" rather than slightly archaic, as it was in Jane's day, is truly peculiar.