

scenic overlook and took the Turquoise Trail into Santa Fe. Our hotel was built like a large adobe structure with all the amenities one would want on the inside.

The speakers were wonderful. We heard Joan Austen-Leigh, who told about all the generations in the family since Jane, and what each has done to promote literature, and especially Austen literature. John Halperin spoke; he said *Pride and Prejudice* is one of the two greatest novels written in the English language. Since his book is also critical of our dear Jane he was allowed no questions. Surely Austenites would not have become rowdy! I sat near Joan Austen-Leigh during that lecture, and the fire really did come out of her eyes as she listened. She was armed with questions, but to no avail.

I heard three very fine lectures in the smaller group sessions. Our own Dr. Raymond Headlee gave an excellent presentation (not just my opinion, but seconded by many) on "Austen's Creativity as Seen in Elizabeth's Change of Heart" from the viewpoint of a psychiatrist. I heard an attorney speak on "Land, Law, and Love" and she looked specifically at entailments. Someone in the audience made a spirited defense of their existence to this day in Canada. A professor from Western Kentucky University spoke on "How Wealthy Is Mr. Darcy Really?" With an economics professor, he had translated the pounds of 1810 England into 1989 dollars adjusted for inflation; Mr. Darcy was worth about \$6 million American dollars by today's standards. There were only 400 families of landed gentry in England at the time, so he would have been one of the top 400.

The book mall was present, and an autograph party was held as were many other interesting events. I did find time to luxuriate in the rooftop hot tub. I had an interesting conversation there with Dr. Halperin about what books he uses in 18th and 19th century British literature classes at Vanderbilt. (The other great novel in English, he says, is Henry James's *The Ambassadors*.) I also met there an active member of next fall's host chapter, who talked about the rehearsals of the musical on S&S—it is going to be a splendid production with delightful songs. The theme of the conference: "Do Come in Costume to Washington." Also met Edith Lank there—she has a column in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* on real estate. Such is the variety of Austenites! We found time to tour ancient Indian sites; we arrived just as a group from the Smithsonian Institution did. We asked and were allowed to tag along for a wonderful two-hour tour. Mary Grant, a JASNA Wisconsinite, was at the AGM and also on this tour.

A couple from Ottawa (he owns a bookstore selling only mysteries and she is a librarian) promoted the AGM in 1991 in Ottawa—theme *Emma*. Their son distributed maple leaf pins to remind us of 1991 in Ottawa. The Missouri region gave us hand-painted badges with a portrait of Jane, etc. The week sped by, and it was a delightful combination of charming, interesting people and stimulating ideas and information about Jane Austen. Anyone considering attending the next AGM should make plans now. (Ed. Note.—Those who are JASNA members can revel in the AGM presentations as reprinted in the recently arrived issue of *Persuasions*, the society's annual publication; it's almost like discovering a new novel by our Jane!)

#### Not a Member? Like to Be?

If you're receiving this and are not a member—perhaps because you signed up at one of our meetings—this may be the last time you'll receive *The Wisconsin Wire*. If you're interested in becoming a member, here are a few particulars: The membership year is December 16 to December 16,

Jane's birthday. Jane Austen Society of North America dues are \$15; add Wisconsin dues of \$2. Treasurer Marialyce Kornkven will gladly accept your check made out to JASNA—Wisconsin and forward the appropriate amount to JASNA. Her address: 6347 Fifth Ave., Kenosha 53140.

#### DR. ELIZABETH FORTER'S BIRTHDAY TEA PRESENTATION ONE OF "SCHOLARSHIP AND HUMOR," APPRECIATED BY AUDIENCE

Wisconsin JASNA celebrated Jane Austen's 214th birthday in style at Watts Tea Shop on December 16. More than 70 people gathered for the third annual birthday tea. They enjoyed the champagne toast written by Stephanie and Martine Meyer that paid homage to Austen's talents, especially her fine female characterizations. The toast was delivered with distinction by Dr. Sybil Robinson.

The main event was a presentation by Dr. Elizabeth Forter, "The Choices in *Persuasion*." Dr. Forter brought her usual scholarship and humor to her presentation. *Persuasion* was Austen's last work and many critics thought it to be her most mature novel. No other heroine waited as long as Anne Elliott for happiness or felt as much as she did. In previous novels society was restored and renewed by the time the lovers were joined. However, in *Persuasion*, the Napoleonic threat was a bittersweet counter to Anne and Frederick's ultimate reunion.

It seemed the audience was well enough versed in Austen's work to fully appreciate Dr. Forter's offering. Many thanks to Dr. Forter for making the trek from Appleton!

This group was the largest ever for the birthday tea, and we can expect the group to continue growing. This presents us with a dilemma. We are almost at our limit at Watts, and there were apparently some problems with the buffet format. Should we stop offering this traditional tea in buffet style, have a sitdown instead, or consider a new site? Please contact any of the officers with your opinions and/or suggestions. —Debra Liebhauser

#### MARK YOUR CALENDARS: PROF. JANE NARDIN SPEAKS TO US SEPT. 22 AT UWM

We've just received confirmation that the chair of UWM's Department of English and Comparative Literature, Prof. Jane Nardin, has agreed to be our presenter in September at UWM's Curtin Hall in the Simultaneous Interpretation Facility. She'll select a title for her topic later, but those who heard her at the Chicago AGM in 1988 will remember her as a delightful speaker. ~~Mark Sept. 22 as a date!~~

#### NEW MEMBERS, WELCOME!

Diane Burns, Greendale, and Kate Swan Letarte, Madison, have joined JASNA—Wisconsin since the last issue.

Thanks to Debra Liebhauser and Joan Weise for their help in mailing this issue of *The Wire*!

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WISCONSIN WIRE is published thrice a year by JASNA—Wisconsin, Rosemary Cummings, Regional Coordinator, 1416 S. Matthias St., Appleton, WI 54915. Address correspondence for the WIRE to Mary Anne Gross, editor, 4421 N. Murray Ave., Shorewood, WI 53211. Treasurer: Marialyce Kornkven, 6347 Fifth Ave., Kenosha, WI 53140; Membership Secy.: Joanne Schwarz, 270 E. Highland Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202.



# Jasna

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

WISCONSIN  
W I R E

Volume 3  
Number 1

Spring, 1990

## An Invitation Arrives From Madison Janeites:

### The Men in Jane Austen's Novels Will Be Featured at Spring JASNA Meeting

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."

—Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

Who does not know by heart Jane's opening to *Pride and Prejudice*? We all remember the men with "a good fortune." Lest we forget the other men who lack more than "a good fortune," Professor Joseph Wiesenfarth will bring them together for us. Professor Wiesenfarth, chair, UW—Madison English Department, and a charter member of the Jane Austen Society of North America, will discuss the men in Jane Austen's novels at the spring meeting in Madison.

The opening of *Pride and Prejudice* is just one of many memorable quotes, and there are just as many popular vignettes. Professor Sybil Robinson, UW—Madison Department of Theatre and Drama, and long-time fan of Jane Austen, will bring them to life. She will present some of her favorite readings.

\*\*\*\*\*

Madison JASNA

requests the pleasure of the company of Jane Austen admirers at the Wisconsin JASNA spring luncheon in the main dining room at the historic Fess Restaurant 123 East Doty Street (off the Capitol Square) on Saturday, April 28, 1990 11:00 a.m. for 11:30 a.m.\*



RSVP

by 20th April

Joyce Bromley

3535 Topping Road

Madison, Wisconsin 53705

Jane Austen period attire optional

\$15.00

\*\*\*\*\*  
The luncheon will include recipes from Jane Austen's characters. As a preview, you have a choice of two main courses:

Mr. Knightley's favorite "Chicken With Apple-Mustard Sauce" or Mansfield Park's "Vegetable Tart"

\*You may arrive at 11:00 a.m.; lunch will begin at 11:30 a.m.

The preceding gracious announcement and formal invitation arrived from the JASNA Madisonians, via Joyce Bromley, who has been coordinating the arrangements committee for Wisconsin JASNA's second spring outing in our capital city. Last year our largest crowd till that date attended our first meeting in Madison; the total was eclipsed by the December birthday tea at Watts, however. Now Madison would like to set a new record. Seventy-five? Eighty? More?

Return your enclosed reservation form, marking your choice for lunch and mailing it SOON, with your check made out to JASNA—Wisconsin.

Joyce says she and committee members Joan Slate and Carol Andreano sampled menu options typical of JA's period; Carol is providing appropriate character names for the courses, and Joan is handling publicity. They plan a printed program and color-coded name tags, and "our arrangements are quite different from what has been done in the past," Joyce says. Questions? You may call Joyce at 608-238-0623.

Carpools from Milwaukee are a possibility; those who would like to drive and those who need a ride may call the editor, 414-278-6335 days or 964-2007 evenings, for a possible match. We'll do the best we can, but the Badger Bus/Greyhound are other possibilities. We'll include a map of downtown Madison with the reservation form. Hurry and reserve your place on Saturday, April 28! Last day for your check to be in Joyce's hands—April 20! And please list names with entree choices if you include guests. See you for an afternoon with the men in JA's novels!



**SAVE SATURDAY, SEPT. 22, 1990, FOR OUR FALL MEETING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE. PROF. JANE NARDIN, HEAD OF UWM'S ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, AUSTEN SPECIALIST AND AGM SPEAKER, HAS AGREED TO PRESENT A TOPIC!**

#### NAMES IN THE JASNEWS:

Among the large pool of those with correct answers to the Persuasion quiz at our birthday tea in December, three prize winners were drawn: Anita Altman, Carol Wegner, and Joan Philosophos. They received prizes from the JA mini-mall (junior version) which Joan (fittingly) had made the trip to Chicago to obtain. Virtue has its own reward. . . . The prizes included a JA daybook, Austen quilt notes, and a cloth calendar (the latter donated by the Illinois region). The mini-mall was returned to Chicago by regional coordinator Rosemary Cummings' son, a Chicago resident. Thank you to Pat Latkin, who stocks and coordinates the mini-mall, and to Joan and Rosemary for helping provide this interesting addition to our preholiday meeting. And thanks much to Debra Liebhauser who stepped into the gap in planning to score all the quizzes so quickly and accurately!

\*\*\*\*

Sybil Robinson, who so eloquently offered the champagne toast to Jane, is an interesting new member of JASNA--Wisconsin: theater professor at UW--Madison and one-woman show artist whose repertoire includes the Bronte sisters, she has recorded all of Shakespeare's works and read selections for Emily Auerbach's classes. Public radio and PBS have also been blessed with performances by her. This "professor who practices her art" has a voice which affirms her British heritage. She's agreed to do a reading at our April 28 Madison meeting at the Fess Hotel--Emily Auerbach will be asked to choose the selection. Next a one-woman show of our Jane?

\*\*\*\*

Dr. Martine Meyer, a UW--Milwaukee professor of French, and daughter Stephanie, a Columbia University grad now doing advanced studies while enjoying herself as an important member of the staff at Webster's Bookstore, wrote the stirring toast to Jane offered at our December 16 tea.

\*\*\*\*

Since several members had family Christmas celebrations to attend on the day of our champagne tea, and thus had to miss Elizabeth Forster's talk, we investigated the possibility of taping the talk. Margaret Thompson brought her recorder, and we hope to be able to lend a duplicate tape to those of you who expressed an interest. It's a shame we didn't think of this sooner--what a library of learning on JA this would make. Or did perhaps one of you tape an earlier JASNA presentation and it escaped our observation? Let us know.

#### A Toast in Honor of Jane Austen's Birthday (For those of you who missed the December Champagne Tea)

If it sometimes happens that a woman is handsomer at 29 than she was ten years before, it is also true that a writer can be more admired 172 years after her death than she was then.

We thank Jane Austen for creating for our enjoyment an uncomplicated and harmonious world; we are grateful for her wry humor and deflation of pomposity; we are eager to meet men who resemble her good-looking and gentlemanly heroes, even if they should sometimes act too proud; and

above all, we rejoice in her positive presentation of female characters. Whether sensible, cool, effective, generous, amiable, interesting, proud, intelligent, sweet, beautiful, handsome, clever, rich, affectionate, cheerful, open, and even "almost pretty," these women warm our hearts and make us grateful to their creator.

So, here is a toast to Jane Austen. Let's drink to her 1989 birthday and to our continued celebration of this memorable event.

--Martine and Stephanie Meyer  
(delivered at 1989 birthday  
celebration by Sybil Robinson)

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#### MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION SCRUTINIZES JANE AUSTEN'S POLITICS, FEMINISM

New Year's Day's New York Times covered the Modern Language Association's convention in Washington, and one of the pulled quotes used to spice up the usually gray layout of the venerable newspaper leapt out at your editor: "Tell me, Professor, was Jane Austen a feminist?" Here is more from the extensive story:

A panel on Jane Austen, the 19th century English novelist of private life and romantic relations among wealthy gentry, revealed the tendency of many in the association to scrutinize works for their political meaning. Entitled "Jane Austen's Politics," the panel examined whether Austen herself accepted the pattern of "patriarchal authority" that existed in her day or whether her novels contained a subtle code rebelling against it--a code that in the current lexicon would be called a "transgressive discourse." In short, where in years past the Austen panel might have discussed a topic like the structure of her narratives, now the question was whether Jane Austen was a feminist.

One panelist, Prof. Avrom Fleishman of Johns Hopkins University, maintained quite simply that while Austen had political ideas--and they generally favored an expansionist foreign policy for Britain--"they don't enter into her fiction."

The issue, Prof. Fleishman said, was whether Austen saw the private concerns described in her novels as "political." His answer is that she did not. Moreover, he continued, critics today are engaging in some wishful thinking when they view Austen as a sexual polemicist.

Others at the panel held that because politics has traditionally been seen as a male activity, Austen has been seen as having no politics at all or as automatically sharing the politics of the males around her.

But this view, they maintained, has been successfully challenged in a scholarly world where "the political dimension of literary and critical works is now a critical truism," as two of the panelists, Susan Morgan of Vassar College and Susan Kneidler of Stanford University, argued in a joint paper.

Reflecting a common view at the convention, they argued that everything in the culture is drenched in political meaning.

"What is radical about Austen's fiction," they said, "is precisely its depiction of familial and sexual relations as a political issue, a matter of the ideology of power." They argued that Austen disapproved of "heterosexual love as a matter of aggression and conquest through which women learn to accept the superior judgment of men." Their explicit assumption here was that male-female relations in 19th-century England were matters of "aggression and

conquest" rather than mutual respect and equality.

The two critics offer as evidence an analysis of the novel *Mansfield Park*, in which the heroine, Fanny, rejects the "regressive and patriarchal definition of love as conquest" by falling in love with Edmund, the suitor who, in his kindness, is the sole male character who does not represent male power and female subservience.

Fanny, who, the two feminist scholars argue, represents Austen's own private political convictions, believes that "seduction and aggression are not romantic, that women's hearts need not be made available to men's demands." Hence their conclusion: Austen herself was indeed a feminist.

(Richard Bernstein wrote this special report to the Times.)

"Wickedly perceptive words: The letters of Jane Austen"--So Says the Chicago Tribune's Review of Jo Modert's Long-Awaited Compendium of JA's Correspondence JASNA's John McAleer, author of a forthcoming biography of Jane, wrote a fascinating account of the struggle to find and publish JA's voluminous correspondence--only 160 letters and fragments have been come to light, with the largest group (79) published by her grandnephew, Lord Brabourne, in 1884. Brabourne "suppressed" some passages and "tidied up" others, substituting the word "stomach" for the less acceptable "bowels," for instance.

According to McAleer, Jane's sister Cassandra is blamed for the scarcity of extant letters--she was supposed to have burned "masses of them"--but Modert says this is nonsense. In fact 94 letters which survive were written to Cassandra. In contrast, Admiral Sir Francis Austen's letters from his sister were burned by his daughter when the admiral died at 91 in 1865.

Modert has spent seven years tracking down and photographing all known, "and some unknown," letters of JA. They turned up in some places you'd expect to find them (51 in the Morgan Library, 17 in the British Library, others at Oxford, Cambridge, Princeton, Harvard, the Maine Historical Society, the Boston Public Library, the Massachusetts Historical Society, Australia's National Library). Others were discovered in the odd walnut bureau bought at an estate sale and a box stored in a Devon museum.

The result is nearly 450 pages of photos containing over 250,000 words in Jane's "fine copperplate script," which "establish the environment that gave Jane Austen's novels their framework." McAleer says, "At every turn we meet the wicked perceptions that dismayed E. M. Forster . . . shocked Sir Harold Nicolson . . . and delighted O. W. Firkins." He quotes G. K. Chesterton: "Jane Austen may have been protected from the truth but precious little of the truth was protected from Jane Austen."

An example of her "downrightness," after visiting a London finishing school: "If it had not been for some naked Cupids over the mantelpiece which must have been a fine study for Girls, one should never have smelt instruction." Writing of her domestic chores as competition for her time, she said, "Composition seems to me impossible, with a head full of joints of mutton and doses of rhubarb." Of a neighbor, she wrote naughtily, "His wife is discovered to be everything that the neighborhood could wish her, silly and cross as well as extravagant."

McAleer says, "Modert has turned up much that is new, and her histories of each letter engross us." He concludes that an appeal for more facsimiles (of letters) from anonymous holders, no questions asked, might still reveal more of JA's prolific letterwriting. Perhaps people are waiting for the

prices to inflate--J. P. Morgan bought 41 letters for \$3,000 in 1920; a single letter sold for \$11,000 in 1982! Imagine how the frugal Jane, daughter of the country clergyman, would be amazed.

The book, *Jane Austen's Manuscript Letters*, published by Southern Illinois University Press in 576 pages, \$50, edited by JASNA member Modert, should be available now, after a delay of more than a year; its original publication date was late 1988. McAleer's review was in the Jan. 7, 1990, Tribune.

And Speaking of Letters, Here's One From Ogden Nash: Ogden Nash's daughter Linell Nash Smith has collected his letters in a 357-page collection published by Little, Brown and Company at \$19.95. The letters reveal the struggle he had to capture the blue-blooded debutante Frances Leonard, Linell's mother. The witty poet addressed letter after playful letter to Frances, and kept a count of her responses versus his missives. She came up short by a mile, he said, and his "sufferings" because of his beloved's "sensible unwillingness to write him as many letters as he expends on her" eventually caused her silence. His ironic response to this mocked his "lopsided attachment . . . for a young female with a pleasant voice and symmetrical features and the modest hesitant shyness of a Jane Austen heroine without the ability of a Jane Austen to carry on a voluminous and agreeable correspondence." Eventually, of course, he married the "princess of ice and beauty," according to Robert Kelly, who reviewed the book in the New York Times Feb. 11, 1990.

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JASNA friend Al Krahn, who teaches English at MATC in Milwaukee, is constantly on the lookout for JA mentions; the Chicago Tribune review of Jo Modert's book was alertly spotted by him and passed on to the editor. He also forwarded the Unwin Hyman *Literature* catalog, which lists the Dale Spender title, *Mothers of the Novel*, subtitled *100 Good Women (sic) Writers Before Jane Austen*. Pandora Press, \$13.95 in paperback, available at many bookstores. Thanks, Al.

#### Echoes of Santa Fe . . . Report From AGM

It is not too early to begin thinking of the 1990 Annual General Meeting to be held Oct. 5-7, Columbus Day Weekend, at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington, D.C. The theme will be Sense and Sensibility, and the committee has commissioned a musical based on this Austen book. Here's a report from Joan Philosophos, Wisconsin JASNA member, who went to last October's AGM in Santa Fe:

It was my first AGM and I loved it. Everyone walks around with constant smiles which seems to say, "I can't believe I took time from my busy schedule to come here and have so much fun."

It was a delight to see the variety of JA admirers. I was pleasantly surprised to see how many men attended. There were members from coast to coast and everywhere in between as well as the Canadian provinces. We came in all sizes, ages, occupations, or lack of same. I was assigned a roommate, and it was a delightful fit. She is a librarian. We arranged to rent a car in Albuquerque and at the airport were joined by Illinois Regional Coordinator and JASNA VP Pat Latkin and Lorraine Hanaway, past president of JASNA. Before we left Albuquerque we stopped at four used bookstores where we all enjoyed ourselves immensely. Then we went up the mountain to a

*Washington AGM Features Sense and Sensibility . . . (continued)*

warm and happy sensation gathering with fellow Janeites can produce. What a marvelous time we had!

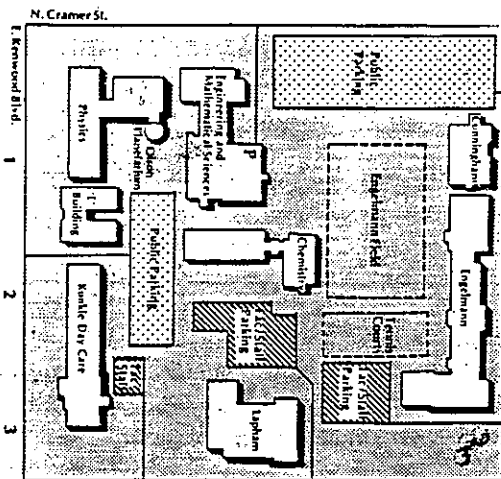
The AGM will be dedicated to Henry G. Burke, one of three founding members of JASNA in 1979, who died Dec. 12, 1989. Burke had more than 1,000 books by or about JA, "the finest privately owned collection anywhere outside the Austen family." The conference will officially open Friday evening at Georgetown University with a reception that includes an exhibit from the Goucher College Henry and Alberta Burke Collection--material selected that relates to S&S.

Another highlight will be the musical play, Elinor and Marianne, based on S&S, which will be presented after the Saturday banquet. Commissioned by JASNA, this production "reshapes the scenes in the style of a Broadway musical." Paula Schwartz wrote the book and lyrics, while Neil Moyer composed the music.

Keynoter will be Henry Geller, director of the Washington Center for Public Policy and a professor at Duke University as well as an adjunct professor at George Washington University. He'll discuss "Governing Principles in Sense and Sensibility." Many other sectional breakouts are planned to entertain and inform Austen fans--for instance, food and drink in JA's time will be JASNA President Eileen Sutherland's topic at Sunday's "nuncheon."

An optional bus tour of Washington Sunday afternoon (\$15 extra) will focus on buildings erected in Jane Austen's time--which was also George Washington's and George III's time. Joan Mentzner, Apt. 616, 3701 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20008, 202-363-9198 (after 7 p.m. and weekends) is taking mail reservations. See you there? Let's get a group together to visit our nation's capital for the AGM.

*Wanted: Superb bakers who would like to let us sample their favorite cookies or tarts. Just a few of you--you know who you are--to volunteer for our September 22 meeting. Let Diane Jones or Judy Perkins know; call 414-229-4752.*



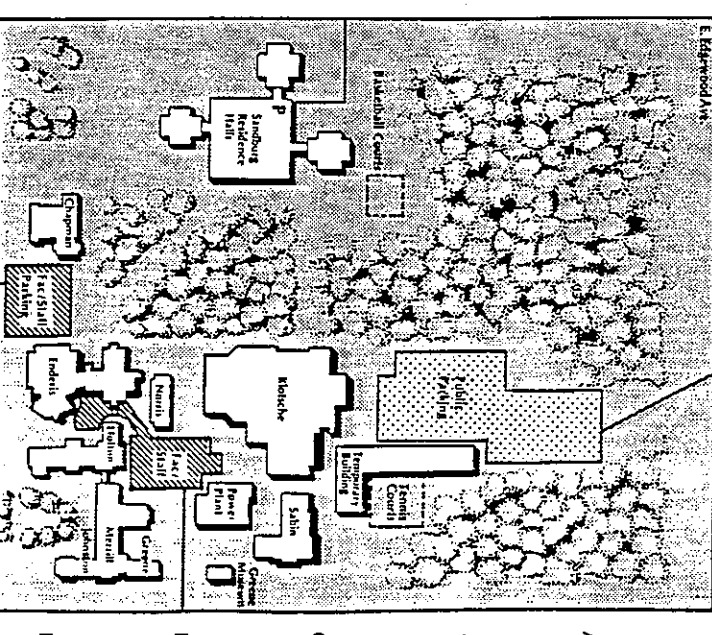
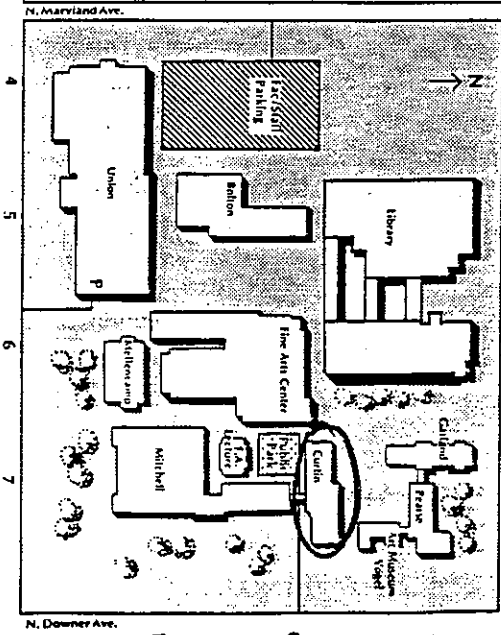
**Welcome, New Members!**

Ann Gordon-Walker, Madison; Leslie Graves, Spring Green; Lorraine Hanaway, Wayne, PA; Rose Helmberger, Madison; Lisa F. Kane, Madison; Barbara Klotz, Madison; Diane Robbins, Middleton; and Kathryn A. Sayles, Belleville

Our latest mailing list for members includes exactly 100! Quite a leap in numbers since our initial meeting in August, 1987--just three years ago. We've passed some otherwise populous states in the JASNA roster, and have even had some feelers about hosting a JASNA AGM.

**Chapter a Day?**

One of our members, Margaret Thompson, wrote Jean Nelson of Wisconsin Public Radio's "Chapter a Day" and asked her to consider doing Sense and Sensibility this fall--perhaps with Dr. Sybil Robinson. The response was interested; Jean also mentioned UW's University of the Air series. Stay tuned!



UW-Milwaukee



# Jasna

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

WISCONSIN  
W I R E

Volume 3  
Number 2

Summer, 1990

## "Children and Their Families"

**Join Us as Prof. Jane Nardin Discusses This Austen Topic Sept. 22 at UWM**

Dr. Jane Nardin, a JASNA patron who heads the English and Comparative Literature Department at the University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee, will be the speaker when JASNA--Wisconsin meets at UWM on Saturday, Sept. 22, 1990. Dr. Nardin, a presenter at the Chicago Annual General Meeting in 1988, has a host of admirers after that session. She has written and spoken widely on JA and her contemporaries; among her books is Those Elegant Decorums: The Concept of Propriety in Jane Austen's Novels, a favorite of Austenites. She is also the author of studies on Barbara Pym and Anthony Trollope.

Her topic is a fitting conclusion to our last several presentations (Paula Friedman at Stritch spoke on sisters, mothers, and daughters last September; Dr. Joseph Wiesenfarth, head of UW--Madison's English Department and JASNA patron, spoke on the men in JA's novels this spring).

We'll meet in Curtin Hall at the University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee, in the Simultaneous Interpretation Facility on the first floor, at 1:00 p.m. It's a marvelous lecture site, and thanks to Dr. Martine Meyer, who heads UWM's French Dept. (and who is a charter member of JASNA--Wisconsin), for suggesting it.

(See the enclosed map for location. Bus access and public parking are convenient; the entrance to Curtin is at the west end of the building, adjacent to the parking lot.)

After our presentation and a short business meeting, we'll retire for refreshments--coffee, tea, and some home-baked sweet treats, and a chance to get acquainted. Reservations? To cover cost of the room and the coffee/tea, send your check for \$2 made out to JASNA--Wisconsin, to treasurer Marialyce Kornkven, 6347 5th Avenue, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140. Any questions? Contact our JASNA members in the UWM Library Acquisitions Dept.--Diane Jones or Judy Perkins--414-229-4752.

Join us to hear an exciting speaker--we're thrilled to have her and would like her to meet as many Wisconsin JASNA members as possible on Saturday, Sept. 22, at 1:00 p.m. in Curtin Hall! Send in your nominal \$2 reservation as soon as possible.

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 Save Saturday, December 15, for our Jane Austen Birthday Party!  
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## Sense and Sensibility Will Be Dissected and Enjoyed Again Oct: 5-7 as JASNA Gathers at The Washington Court on Capitol Hill for AGM

JASNA members should have received their official invitation to the Annual General Meeting in Washington, D.C., Oct. 5-7. It contained material on registration fees (\$175), rooms at the conference hotel (The Washington Court), which begin at \$99 (a roommate matching service is available), and about the program itself, based on Jane's first published novel, S&S.

Wisconsinites who'd like to attend this AGM had better make plans NOW--before it's too late! Those of us who've attended recent AGMs in Chicago (1988) or Santa Fe (1989) can vouch for the

*Continued on back page*

## Letters . . . from JASNA Wisconsin's Postbag

From a charter regional member:

Just received The Wisconsin Wire, which I so much enjoyed reading. I wish I could attend the April 28 (Madison meeting), but on that day I'll be chairing a meeting of 400 genealogists at the Cousins Center. I hope the meeting is taped so I can hear it someday.

In the same mail as the Wire, I received the April issue of Victoria Magazine which has an article on Jane Austen; sending you a photocopy. Sincerely, Edith Ann Malson

**Ed. Note:** Missed you at the meeting, but yes, Margaret Thompson again recorded the meeting's proceedings for us. Contact the editor to borrow a copy. The article in Victoria was most interesting. Entitled "The Sense and Sensibility of Jane Austen," by Catherine Calvert, it gave a finely drawn picture of life at Chawton, complete with setting, photos, and quotations. More elsewhere in this issue!

A request from an Austen scholar:

My name is Anne-Marie Scholz and I am a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of California, Irvine, working on a dissertation about Jane Austen's reception in the United States between 1830 and roughly 1960. I am also a new member of the Jane Austen Society, and hope that a few of you might be able to help me find materials useful for my study. If anyone has any information about 19th century American documents wherein Austen is discussed, such as books, memoirs, magazines, journals, or correspondence, I would greatly appreciate a citation. Information about library collections could be useful as well. Up to now I have been working with A Bibliography of Jane Austen, by David Gilson. This work has been indispensable to me, but it is not exhaustive, as I have found references to Austen in materials not listed in Gilson. Significant items need not be specifically about Austen nor about literature, per se. It could be a rhetorical remark, an epigraph, a picture, a passing reference, etc. Please send citations, leads, or suggestions to me at the Department of History, University of California, Irvine, Irvine, CA 92717, or call me at (714) 526-2648.

From JASNA president Eileen Sutherland:

You certainly make the Wisconsin meetings sound very interesting . . . also enjoyed the review of the Facsimile Letters and the article about JA's feminism. Lots of "food for thought." . . .

From JASNA past president Lorraine Hanaway:

Congratulations on your Wisconsin Wire and its new format. It's very attractive and full of good stuff. [I'm not a fan of tiny type, but I do appreciate some of the reasons why you used it in the new issue.] I've sent a membership check to Marialyce Kornkven and look forward to receiving future issues of your good work. Yours . . .

**Ed. Note:** Thanks, Lorraine. Our problem was keeping the publication within manageable bounds for mailing purposes . . . with the many items to be included, the tiny type was a necessity, but we'll try to keep it to a minimum. (Lorraine has become a regular correspondent of ours, and her words of encouragement have been food for the soul.)

## Thank you, "freinds":

To the Madison committee which made the spring meeting so marvelous: Joyce Bromley, who worked so hard on arrangements and found a lovely setting for us, down to the appropriate wallpaper (!); Carol Andreano, who did the witty naming of the courses; Joan Slate, whose publicity helped draw another large crowd; Winifred Batson, who helped with the JA mini mall (and also to Joan Weise of Milwaukee who stepped in to take over when Winifred had to leave).

To our "Talented Talent": Profs. Joseph Wiesenfarth and Sybil Robinson—they made the afternoon with their contributions and we can't thank them enough. Sybil's mellifluous rendering of a reading from S&S set the stage for Joe's well-received look at some of the heroic and less-than-heroic male characters in JA's repertoire. We loved hearing our founding patron speaker capture these men and their virtues/flaws in a few choice phrases written by our Jane, admiring again (and understanding better perhaps) Mr. Knightley, smiling again over the insufferable Mr. Collins, probing the personalities of some of the less scrupinized and the more familiar men of the novels. A wonderful afternoon! [We have it on tape! May we suggest that Prof. Wiesenfarth submit his presentation to Persuasions so that JASNA members in general may enjoy his observations.--Ed.]

## In Memoriam

JASNA-Wisconsin sends its condolences to Rosemary Cummings, regional coordinator, whose husband Joseph, an attorney in Appleton, died on June 18 after being hospitalized with heart problems. Joe had attended several of our meetings—he was at the Madison one in 1989 and made an appearance at the December tea as well, before going off to the Marquette basketball game. His hospital stay in April was the reason Rosemary missed the Madison meeting at the Fess Restaurant. JASNA-Wisconsin has sent a memorial gift to the Heart Association in Joe's name.

## The Sense and Sensibility of Jane Austen

Thus titled was the story in Victoria magazine this spring, and appropriately so, for that's the theme of this fall's Annual General Meeting in Washington.

The article, which focused on Chawton Cottage, was lavishly illustrated with beautiful photos of the interior and the exterior, including the gardens where Jane walked. Catherine Calvert's prose gave one a real sense of being there, as Jane caught sight of Chawton's church steeple, dressed as she was in a "serviceable gray pelisse, her hat firmly settled on her head, turning with a smile to her sister Cassandra."

Description abounds: "Though simple, their new house was very nice indeed—of brick with white trim and all the grace and order of Georgian architecture. There was a drawing room, above, a parlor, opposite, which looked out on the lane, and a kitchen and sculleries. Five bedrooms upstairs provided space for visiting nieces and wandering brothers, in addition to maidservants. Out back was a bake house and stable for the family's donkey and cart, and, more importantly, a garden."

Colombines, lilacs. Sweet William, pinks—and an orchard which she dearly loved to walk around—were part of the

Chawton setting. Jane loved it. "The beauties of nature must for me be one of the joys of Heaven," she is quoted as saying.

"Good apple pies are a considerable part of our domestic happiness," she wrote later. The domestic life for Jane consisted mainly of preparing breakfast and brewing tea, according to Calvert,\* since Cassandra ran the household, but Jane took an interest in everything, we can be sure, including the neighbors—grand relations and those in the simpler cottages nearby.

She wrote, during her eight years at Chawton, the major works "which made her reputation": P&P, S&S, Emma, and Mansfield Park. And the "harmony of Chawton with its quiet lanes and gentle pace made their birth possible." The story describes some of the needlework found in Chawton Cottage, products of Jane's nimble fingers—of course, the famous quilt, but also spider-web-fine lace collars, and a needlecase made for a niece. She was deft as well at games; a popular parlor game of the time, cup and ball, was her forte—she caught the ball upwards of 100 times, according to a niece.

Like Emma, for other amusement, she had only to go to her door to have the village and its doings under her gaze. The article concludes with a paragraph on JASNA and its affairs, including a mention of the AGM and Persuasions, and a reference to Jane's famous "important nothings" which we love so well.

\* See next article, "A Dinner to Serve Without Pride"

## "A Dinner to Serve Without Pride, to Eat Without Prejudice"

A February issue of the Baltimore Sun, in the section called "Maryland Kitchen," tells of an Austen-inspired menu, and a bit more than that, it gives a character sketch of her that is a delight!

"It may not occur to you, as you slice a turnip, pluck a pear, sew new trim on an old dress to make it do, or deal with a difficult elderly mother, that you are following in the elegant and sprightly footsteps of Jane Austen. But you are," Rosemary Knower, the writer, says.

"This splendid lady, whose delight in the ridiculous was the source of so much laughter for others," according to the article, spent the 17 years between her first submission to a publisher and her first publication conducting explorations into unusual cookery "such as oxcheeks with dumplings" and curing hams, distilling wine, and managing poultry, indulging in her taste for what she called "experimental housekeeping."

The menu in the article included a pease soup, sweetbreads in puffs, grilled lamb chops with rosemary butter, turnip and tomato casserole, and pears stuffed with currants and apricots. Recipes for this "rectory supper" came from "sources contemporary with Austen," they say. Martha Lloyd, who lived with the Austen girls for 15 years and eventually married Francis Austen, JA's brother, wrote down many household recipes which were later collected by Peggy Hickman in A Jane Austen Household Book.

## MORE MENTIONS OF JANE:

Travel Columnist Steve Birnbaum had a column this spring which included advice for a Janeite about where to go to see Jane's "footsteps." He wrote a rather comprehensive article, including several addresses she lived at in Bath (4 Sydney Place and 27 Green Park Building) and the place where she spent her final two months in Winchester (8 College Street),

before succumbing to what is believed to have been Addison's disease. Her burial site in Winchester Cathedral, and the fact that some of her effects are in the nearby City Museum, are also mentioned. Of course Steventon and Chawton are also detailed, and a tour which includes the places mentioned plus a guide from the Bristol Jane Austen Society is mentioned. One tour was set for June 2-10; another is Sept. 29-Oct. 7 (a conflict with the AGM—but if you'll be in England then anyway . . . it's arranged through Bookmark Tours; US telephone number 619-437-1211; land-only price is \$1520). (Rosemary Cummings, our regional coordinator, found this 10-inch-long column in the Appleton Post-Crescent.)

JASNA Southwest News (Southern California) has an annotated itinerary of a trip to England by three of its members—Diana Birchall, Harriet Williams, and Lucy Magruder (what fitting names!)—and here's what was said about their visit to Chatsworth:

We walked all over the fabulous house and grounds, debating whether or not it really was Pemberley. The situation was exactly right: Harriet followed Elizabeth's path, from the place at the top of "a considerable eminence" where "the eye was instantly caught" by the house, to where Mr. Darcy appeared from the road behind the stables; but the house itself seemed too grand and ornate to justify the description of Pemberley as "neither gaudy nor uselessly fine; with less of splendor, and more real elegance, than the furniture of Rosings."

[Oh, well, another dream dashed—your editor's Royal Doulton china pattern, owned for 36 years, is called Chatsworth, and I'd hoped for an Austen connection.]

From Pat Latkin, erstwhile Wisconsinite who is JASNA vice-president and stalwart in the Illinois region, came a copy of a Chicago Tribune article headlined "Younger crop of Austen devotees seeking refuge from frantic age"—published to coincide with the Illinois region's 10th anniversary. In the article are quoted younger generation Janeites—like Luanne Redmond, Chicago attorney, and Marquette University's Claudia Johnson, who says she teaches JA's novels in her courses because the writer "treats women's lives like they were important." The 300-member Illinois sister region is growing while other literary societies wane, according to author Hilary Richardson Bagnato, because JASNA provides a "a civilized refuge in an otherwise frantic age." Other Janeites quoted are Karen Richardson, a young civil engineer, and Melanie LaMonica, 33, an associate dean for grants and administration at Triton College, both fans who appreciate JA's gentility and humor. Congratulations to our sister (and mother) chapter, the Illinois region!

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Save Saturday, December 15, for our birthday celebration for our Jane!  
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Wisconsin Wire is a publication of the Jane Austen Society of North America, Wisconsin Region, Rosemary Cummings, Regional Coordinator, 1416 S. Matthias St., Appleton, WI 54915. Address correspondence to Editor Mary Anne Gross, 4421 N. Murray Ave., Shorewood, WI 53211. Send Treasurer Marialyce Kornkven dues of \$17 (combined JASNA and Wisconsin), checks made out to JASNA—WI, addressed to 6347 5th Ave., Kenosha, WI 53140. Membership year: Dec. 16 to Dec. 16 (JA's birthday).