In This Issue

Jane Austen in the News
Spring Meeting Recap
2016 AGM Registration
Reading Groups
Connect on Social Media

Jane Austen in the News!

JASNA-Southwest
The New Yorker recently highlighted the loan of "the shirt" worn by Colin Firth in the 1995 Pride and Prejudice to The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C.

PBS NewsHour recently featured an interview with Curtis Sittenfeld, author of Eligible, a modern retelling of Pride and Prejudice.

Tickets are now on sale for the production of Sense and

Spring Meeting Recap

Emma on Board

JASNA-Southwest members and guests boarded the historic Queen Mary in Long Beach, California, for the Spring 2016 Meeting, with the theme "Emma On Board," in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the publication of Emma.

More than a hundred attendees gathered in the elegant Queen's Salon for a full day of speakers and activities, beginning with a talk by Juliet McMaster -- renowned 19th century English literature scholar, frequent presenter at JASNA Annual General Meetings, founder of Juvenilia Press, and co-author of The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen, among many other works.

McMaster began by reading from her late husband's paper "I Hate to Hear of Women on Board," which opens with the discussion from Persuasion between Captain Wentworth, his sister and Admiral Croft about whether women can be made comfortable aboard a ship. She described Austen's seafaring brothers Charles and Francis, and their contrasting approaches to military service during a time in Britain's history rife with war. McMaster then explored the female experience at sea, sharing details of four types of women on board during Austen's era: ladies, below-deck wives, prostitutes and women serving in the Navy dressed as men. She also enlightened the audience about the origin of the phrase "son of a gun," which was how a baby born on a Naval vessel was entered on the ship's register.
Next, JASNA-Southwest member and Chapman University Professor Lynda Hall presented "Miss Bates: Superfluous Spinster or Sympathetic Spectator?" While Miss Bates is an important catalyst in the heroine's transformation, Hall explained that Austen also uses the spinster to highlight the relative value of unmarried women in early 19th century England. Miss Bates is the opposite of "handsome, clever, and rich," she noted. "Within the narrative space, Miss Bates fights against her lack of importance, foreshadowing the poverty Harriet Smith might face if she does not marry Mr. Martin and the confinement that Jane Fairfax will need to endure if she does not marry Frank Churchill -- even as she represents the meddling bore that Emma might become if she were to remain single."

Hall added that we understand the worth of other characters by how they treat Miss Bates. For instance, she compared Mr. Knightley's subtle and anonymous patronage with Frank Churchill's selfishness and Mrs. Elton's exultation of her status as "lady patroness." She also emphasized how Miss Bates' long speeches lure the reader into inattention, which works as a key plot device.

McMaster returned to discuss "Destined ... for the Sea": The Hero of Catharine, or the Bower -- a work from Austen's juvenilia. She shared her theory on how Austen would have finished the story, and also signed copies of numerous publications she illustrated for Juvenilia Press.
Following lunch, which included a quiz on famous first lines from a wide range of novels, Bernie Su -- an executive producer and head writer for the award-winning digital series *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* and *Emma Approved* -- took the stage. He was joined by several lead actors from the latter series: Joanna Sotomura (Emma Woodhouse), Brent Bailey (Alex Knightley), Dayeanne Hutton (Harriet Smith) and James Brent Isaacs (Robert "B-Mart" Marin).

The panel discussed the making of *Emma Approved*, its multicultural casting, their favorite moments from the series, the challenges and joys of translating Austen's work to present-era Los Angeles, and much more. "I felt like we did a fairly accurate job of representing Austen's Emma," said Sotomura, who credited the writers with making that happen. "She's just as stubborn and unlikeable in the beginning of our show as she is in the novel."

Isaacs drew considerable applause when he declared being a longtime Austen aficionado. When he was being considered for the role, he said he wrote to the producers: "And this is a direct quote: 'I have loved and read every Jane Austen novel.'"

Although Isaacs and numerous others involved in series and its predecessor already knew and appreciated Austen, Su noted that the production company, Pemberley Digital, has introduced thousands of new fans to her work.
Online registration for this year's Annual General Meeting of the Jane Austen Society of North America begins Wednesday, June 8 at noon, Eastern Daylight time. Mark your calendars!

In the meantime, an online version of the AGM brochure is available now on JASNA's AGM website.

### Reading Groups
#### Upcoming Meetings/Info

Send us photos from your reading group so we can share them here, on our Facebook page and/or the JASNA-SW website.

Saturday, June 11, 1:30 p.m.
**Westside/405 Reading Group**
*The Shuttle* by Frances Hodgson Burnett  
Location: home of Syrie James  
For more information, contact Karen Berk, 310-477-6753.

Sunday, June 12, 6 p.m.
**Santa Monica Reading Group**
Members' choice of book by one of the Mitford sisters (Nancy, Jessica or Deborah)  
Location: Diana Birchall's Santa Monica home  
For more information, contact Diana Birchall, 310-394-2196.

Sunday, June 12, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
**West Los Angeles Reading Group**  
*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte  
Discussion leader: Dr. Charles Lynn Batten  
This group is at capacity and cannot accept new members. Current members may contact Clara Browda, 310-278-8759, for more information on upcoming meetings.

*The Westside/405 Reading Group is accepting new members. For more information, contact Karen Berk, 310-477-6753.*

Saturday, June 25, 1:30 p.m.
**Long Beach Reading Group**  
*Aristocrats: Caroline, Emily, Louisa, and Sarah Lennox, 1740-1832*, by Stella Tillyard  
For more information, contact Gerda Kilgore, 562-496-4452.
Sunday, July 17, 12:30 p.m.  
**Orange County Reading Group**  
Alfresco reading of Tracy Neis' play *Box Hill Picnic*, complete with lemonade and fresh strawberries  
Location: TriCity Park, Fullerton  
For more information, contact Viki Barie, 714-309-6702.

Sunday, July 17  
**Pasadena Area Reading Group**  
*Miss Buncle's Book* by D. E. Stevenson  
This group is at capacity and cannot accept members. Current members may contact Susan Ridgeway, 626-357-1397, for information on upcoming meetings.

*The San Gabriel Valley Reading Group is accepting new members. Contact Kelly Duir, 909-967-6630.*

Sunday, July 17, 1 p.m.  
**NEW Riverside Reading Group**  
*Emma* by Jane Austen; *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfeld  
Location: Home of Cristi Hendry  
For more information, contact Cristi Hendry.

Sunday, July 17, 2-4 p.m.  
**San Fernando Valley Reading Group**  
*The Prime Minister* by Anthony Trollope  
For more information, contact Cheryl Cole, 310-422-5475.

Sunday, July 24, 2-4 p.m.  
**South Bay Reading Group**  
*Lady Susan* by Jane Austen  
The film *Love and Friendship* also will be discussed. New and returning members are welcome.  
For more information, contact Jeanine Holquin, 805-444-8999.

Saturday, July 30, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.  
**San Gabriel Valley Reading Group**  
*Middlemarch*, by George Eliot  
Location: MSAG meeting room in Claremont  
The group will host a potluck lunch.  
For more information, contact Kelly Duir, 909-967-6630.

*Additional Reading Groups*
Riverside County Reading Group
Meetings are held at the Temecula Public Library, 30600 Pauba Road, Temecula, in Community Room B. For more information, contact Rebecca Weersing, 951-595-7046.

San Diego Reading Group
Although San Diego is a separate JASNA region, many JASNA-Southwest members are interested in San Diego JASNA events and vice versa. For information on upcoming San Diego JASNA meetings, contact Jeanne Talbot, 808-342-0666.

Join us on Facebook
Are you on Facebook? So is JASNA-SW! Stay connected in between our meetings and e-newsletter updates, share your Austen-related stories, favorites, travel and more with fellow Janeites!