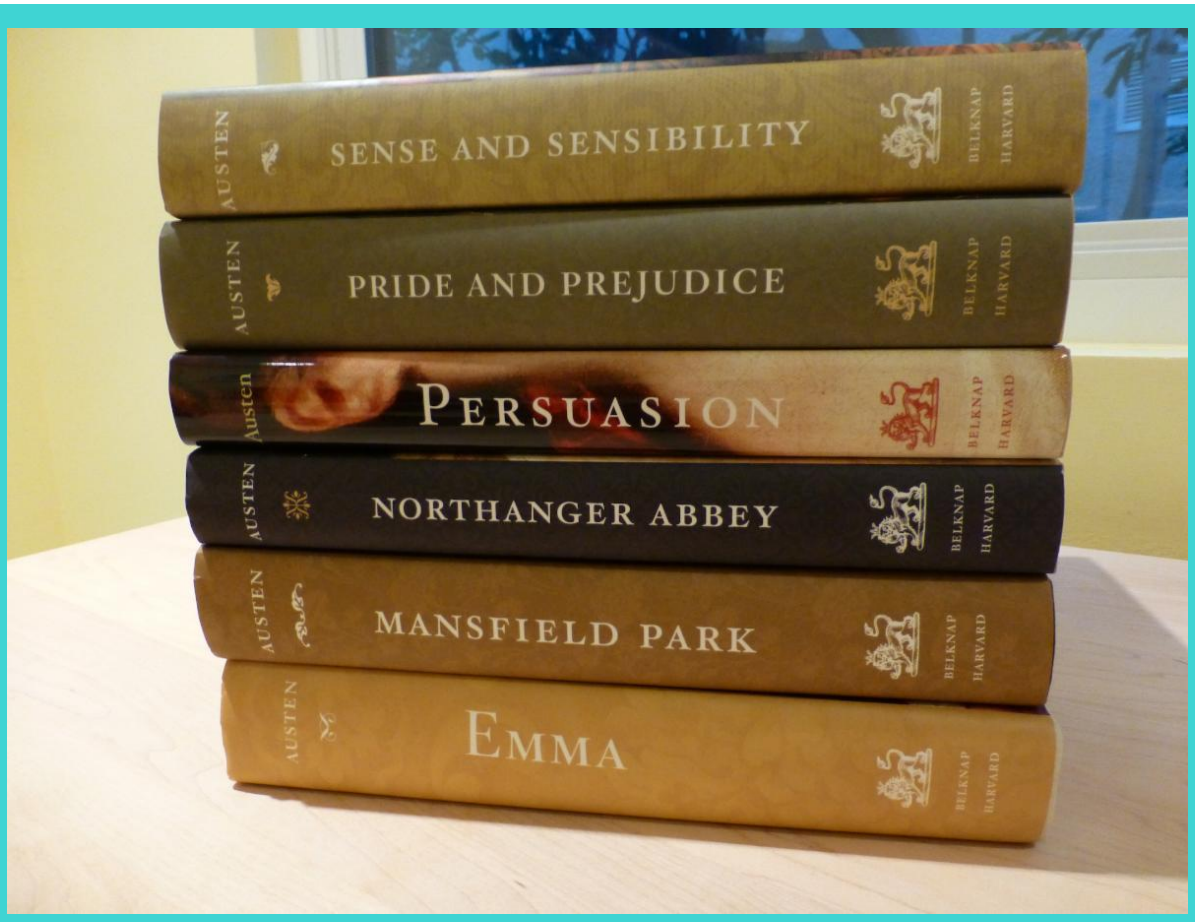
Jane Austen Society of North America, Southwest Region

June 2020 Newsletter



Vote for Your Austen Favorites!

Which Austen novel is your favorite? How would you rank Austen's parental figures? Who is the most ill-used character in the Austen oeuvre (actual ill usage and perceived ill usage)? What hero and heroine do you most admire?

Vote for your favorite "candidates" and share your comments. The results will be featured in our July newsletter.

Take the survey now!

This newsletter was prepared before the recent civil unrest. We hope you and your loved ones are safe and sound, and that peace and justice will ultimately prevail. We all need inspiration and support during these challenging times, and our shared love of Jane Austen is a wonderful source of camaraderie and comfort.

Event Updates

Your JASNA Southwest board is working hard on plans for region-wide virtual meetings while we take a hiatus in our in-person gatherings due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

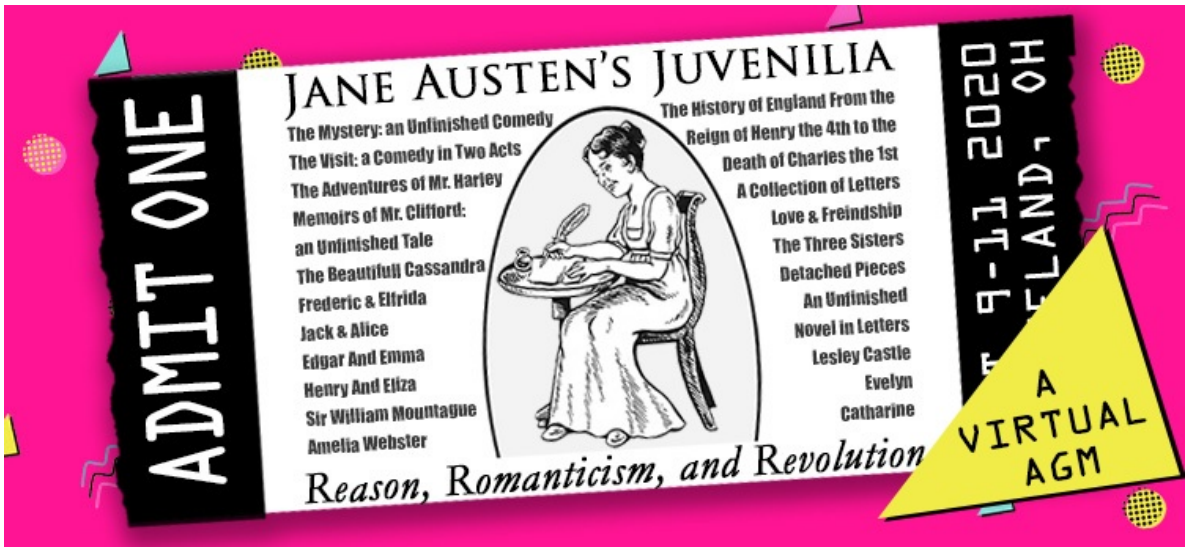
We are postponing all in-person meetings for the next full year (through June 2021) and have rescheduled our Mission Inn event until November 13, 2021 (previously announced for May 1, 2021).

This pause includes our participation in the Festival of Books, which has been rescheduled for October. The Festival of Books is the largest of its kind in the nation, drawing some 150,000 visitors a year. The event may end up being canceled but, even if it does proceed, we have decided to give up our booth for October to ensure the safety of our volunteers and visitors. It is clear that a vaccine will not be available this fall -- and a gathering of this size, in the tight spaces of the festival's booths, raises significant concerns.

On a brighter note, we are truly excited to have this opportunity to explore new ways of connecting. We look forward to bringing you informative and engaging lectures and discussions, albeit in a new format. This will also give us an opportunity to host free or very-low-cost events, which has long been a goal. We hope it will also allow some of our members who are less able to travel to enjoy our events as well. We'll be posting the latest here and in our monthly newsletter as soon as plans are firmed up. Meanwhile, many of our reading groups have moved to online sessions. See the upcoming schedule below.

Rest assured that, as soon as it's safe to resume in-person events, we will be ready and will take every precaution to keep you safe. Thank you for your understanding. We look forward to "seeing" you at an upcoming Zoom meeting. And please send any suggestions to Regional Coordinator Susie Wampler!

AGM Goes Virtual



JASNA's Annual General Meeting is back on track for October 9-11, but will be offered as a virtual conference instead of an in-person one. This will provide a wonderful opportunity for anyone who has never been able to attend, as well as for those who are die-hard AGM-goers and were disappointed that this year's long-awaited event was going to be canceled.

No, it won't be quite the same as usual, but some aspects may be even better!

JASNA has not yet announced when registration will open, or what the cost of attendance may be. For more information, visit jasna.org.

Austen Amusements and Insights

Chawton House held an immensely popular Lockdown Literary Festival in May, with much of the content still available to view on Chawton House's YouTube channel.

TIME magazine featured an interesting piece paralleling today's isolation with the social distance by default of Regency England.

In case you missed it, Devoney Looser debunked five Austen myths in a piece in *The Washington Post* in March.

Looking for a podcast to try? Here are a few to consider:

- Focus Features podcast on Austen and Emma
- Bonnets at Dawn
- What's Her Name
- First Impressions

Paul Birchall, the librarian at Avalon Library on Catalina Island and son of Diana Birchall, filmed his Storytime for Grown Ups, with a reading from *Pride and Prejudice* (in which he portrays Mr. Collins and an ostrich plays Lizzy Bennet). The Austen segment begins at the 6:30 mark in the video.

On June 13, 6:30 p.m. Pacific, Diana Birchall (Mrs. Bennet), Syrie James (Lady Catherine de Burgh) and Paul Birchall (the Judge) will perform Birchall and James' play *The Austen Assizes* via Zoom and/or YouTube. The play (originally performed at the 2012 AGM) is part of a two-weekend, free virtual conference "JAFF in June." Learn more on the Jane Austen Variations website.

Diana Birchall

Syrie James

Paul Birchall

Young Filmmakers Contest 2020

Young Filmmakers contest

JASNA Southwest's annual contest is underway, calling for original shorts of five minutes or less centered around Jane Austen. In addition to welcoming submissions from students, this year we invite all Jane Austen enthusiasts under the age of 30 to enter. Cash prizes and endless adulation await the top three. Deadline is October 30.

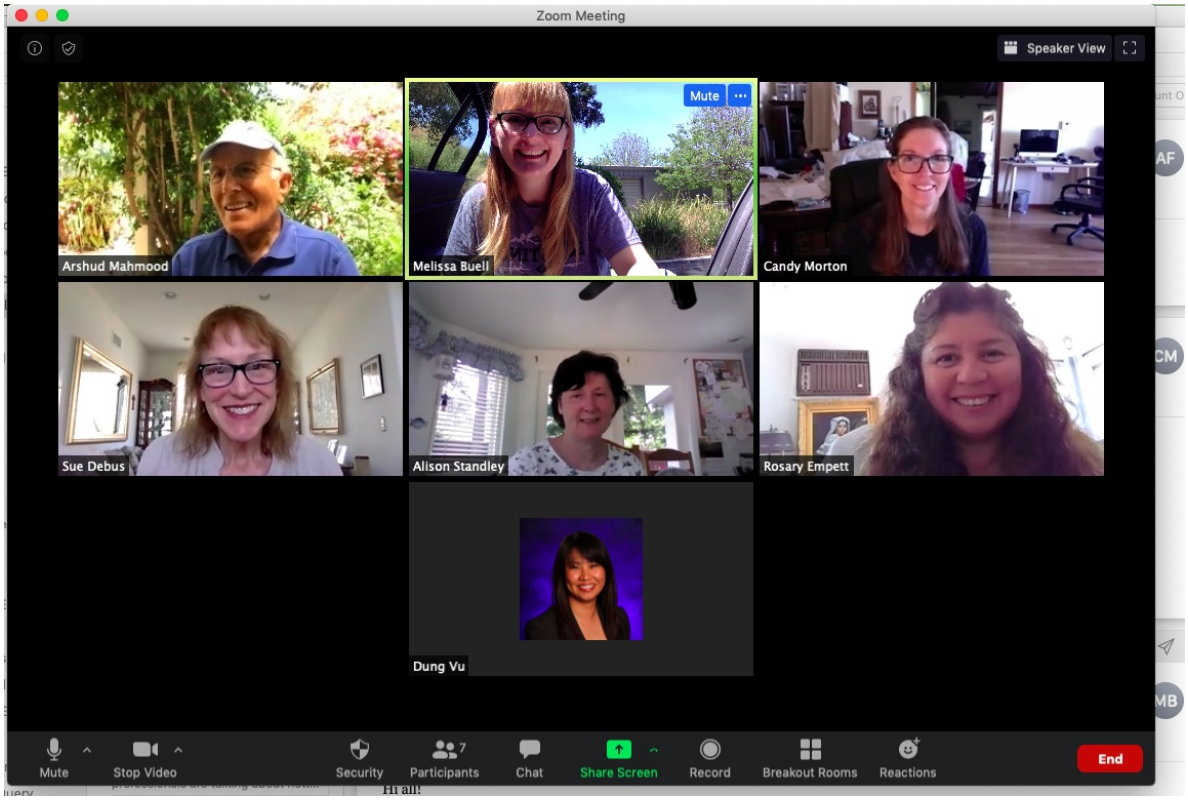
This year marks the anniversary of numerous important film adaptations of Austen's novels. It is the perfect opportunity for us to nurture the future legacy of Austen on screen.

Help us spread the word by urging the young film enthusiasts you know to enter. Or try your own hand at writing/directing if you qualify.

Our JASNA Southwest website has additional details, as well as the 2020 Young Filmmakers flyer and 2020 entry form. You can also link to and view past winners.

Full details are available by contacting youngfilm@jasnasw.org.

Reading/Film/Game Groups



North Orange County Reading Group's recent Zoom meeting

Thursday, June 11, 6:30 p.m.
Janeites Reading Trollope Reading Group
Framley Parsonage by Anthony Trollope
Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.

For more information, contact Lora Walker.

Sunday, June 14, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
West Los Angeles Reading Group
The Age of Innocence by Edith Wharton
Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.
For more information, contact Katie Walker.

Saturday, June 20, 12:30 p.m.
Long Beach Reading Group
Wives and Daughters by Elizabeth Gaskell (book and miniseries)
Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.
For more information, contact Sherwood Smith.

Saturday, June 20, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Ventura County Reading Group
Unmarriageable by Soniah Kamal
Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.
For more information, contact Phyllis Michaels.

Sunday, July 12
South Bay Reading Group
Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day by Winifred Watson
Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.
For more information, contact Jeanine Holguin.

Sunday, July 19
San Fernando Valley Reading Group
Dr. Thorne by Anthony Trollope
Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.
For more information, contact Cheryl Cole.

Sunday, July 27, 1 p.m.
Riverside Reading Group
Mansfield Park by Jane Austen
Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.
For more information, contact Vicki Broach.

September (date TBD)
South Bay Reading Group
The Little Princess by Frances Hodgson Burnett
Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.
For more information, contact Jeanine Holguin.

Visit our website!

Stay Connected

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