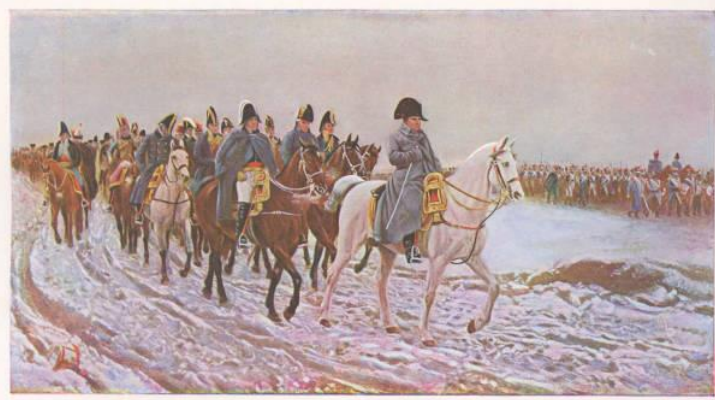




JASNA Greater Phoenix Newsletter
September 2023

In This Month In History
Napoleonic Wars: Battle of Bordinò September 7, 1812



In the year 1812, Jane Austen was 37 years old and Napoleon's armies marched into Russia to force Tsar Alexander to stop trade with Britain. Through a series of long, forced marches, Napoleon pushed his army of half a million through Russia. Six disastrous months later, only 100,000 people made it out. The Russian army refused to engage initially and retreated into the interior of Russia.

Napoleon's forces did not have the supplies needed for the long march. Russian roads were rough and the army ill prepared for Russia's harsh winter.

The Battle of Bordinò in September of 1812 resulted in 70,000 casualties in one day. Although the Russian army was defeated, and the French did advance to Moscow, the many losses suffered at Bordinò led to France's ultimate defeat. Overall, the invasion halted Napoleon's march across Europe.



JASNA Summer Fest Ball

June 24, 2023

By Sylvia Hom

While it may be possible to do without dancing entirely, JASNA PHX members have been known to pass many, many months successively, without attending a ball of any description. In fact, no material injury accrues either to body or mind. However, when the felicities of rapid motion have been felt and delighted in, it must be a very sedentary set that does not ask for more.



“What a charming amusement for young people, this is. There is nothing like dancing, after all.” (Northanger Abbey)

An ebullient group of more than fifty JASNA Greater Phoenix and Phoenix Traditional Music & Dance members gathered for a Summer Fest Ball at the Irish Cultural Center on a splendid summer afternoon. It was a chance to enjoy the felicities of English country dancing, try a hand at whist, and delight in the best company of Janeites and Regency dance enthusiasts.

“The gentlemen were in their Sunday best, the soldiers resplendent in scarlet and buff, and the ladies wore a rainbow of lace and taffeta.” (Pride and Prejudice)



Our very own Dance Mistress, Peg Hesley, composed a captivating program of English country dances, including 'Peace Be With You,' 'Draper's Gardens,' 'I Care Not for These Ladies,' and the popular 'Duke of Kent's Waltz.' Peg's style of calling dances was engaging, lively and full of fun. Executing left and right stars with a group of four along with two hand turns and passing by right and left shoulders with your partner were easy to follow as Peg demonstrated them. Passing shoulders with your partner presented an opportunity to exchange soulful looks, perhaps to further a romantic relationship.



Music by the Parsons Sisters



Duke of Kent's Waltz



"There were twenty dances, and I danced them all, & without any fatigue. I fancy I could dance for a week together as for half an hour." (Letter to Cassandra 1798)



Sparkling cider and blush juice along with tasty provisions provided plentiful refreshment when dancers took a break. Enthusiastic rounds of whist were played. Janeites huddled to exchange ‘news’ with old friends and make new acquaintances. Door prizes were distributed to lucky ticket holders and a 50/50 raffle winner was announced. All was presided over by our illustrious Regional Coordinator Emily Smith. Her masterful organization and direction ensured that our Summer Fest Ball was the height of fun and frivolity. What a capital summer afternoon!



“The ball proceeded pleasantly. Everybody seemed happy; and the praise of being a delightful ball, which is seldom bestowed till after a ball has ceased to be, was repeatedly given in the very beginning of the existence of this.” (Emma)



A special ‘Thank You’ to Judy Norman for creating these beautiful nametags.

“And though the love of a hyacinth may be rather domestic, who can tell, the sentiment once raised, but you may in time come to love a rose?” (Northanger Abbey)



Prescott Tea Party at the Canyon Club by Kathleen Fulton

As a new JASNA member, Kathleen Fulton was thrilled to attend the Afternoon Tea Party and thoroughly enjoyed meeting and chatting with other Chapter members. Kathleen (an experienced English Country dancer) appreciated being able to catch-up with a few long-time JASNA members who had attended ECD balls in the Phoenix area in the past decade. The location of the Afternoon Tea was perfectly suited for a respite and the table settings were stunningly appropriate!





Delightful Tea Party by Carole Penfield with Chat GPI

Dearest Readers,

Upon the fine early afternoon of Sunday, the 16th of July, a select company of fifteen elegant ladies and two esteemed gentlemen graced the lovely environs of the Capital Country Club in Prescott for a most delightful tea party. Despite the warm climes, certain guests arrived bedecked in resplendent Regency attire, adding a touch of bygone elegance to the gathering. Old friends and new mingled, imbibing a strange but pleasant bubbly beverage, recommended by Lady Moore.

Within the tastefully adorned chamber, one found not merely fine china of the most exquisite sort but also an assortment of teas, among which the preferred Earl Gray held its place of honour. Each table was laid with a selection of dainty tea sandwiches, notably cucumber, smoked salmon, asparagus, and chicken salad, prepared with the utmost care and refinement.

Furthermore, the three-layered tea tray bore traditional scones, accompanied by the delectable offerings of lemon curd and clotted cream, a treat to gratify even the most discerning palate. To add to the pleasures, there were vanilla and chocolate cupcakes, whose delectable taste brought immense enjoyment to all in attendance.

As our satisfied stomachs attested to the excellence of the repast, the time for conviviality and the exchange of tokens arrived. In this lively parlour of friendship, we partook of a game in which we each undertook the role of an Austen character and chose a package from a colourful array on a table. Following a friendly banter and eagerly awaited exchange of party favours, a testament to the harmony and goodwill marked the day. Through good fortune, I had the pleasure of acquiring a pair of stockings, bearing the likeness of our dear Miss Austen, which I daresay shall prevent chilblains when our weather turns cold. And my dearest spouse had the good fortune to select stamps bearing her image to further his favourite pastime of letter writing. Our gracious hostess Lady Emily encouraged the exchange of gifts in a lively game, but most seemed pleased with their own choices or were too polite to take another's treasure.

And so, as the hours passed in the company of kindred spirits, we bid adieu to the Capital Country Club, our hearts filled with contentment, and our minds cherishing the fond memories of this delightful gathering. May such gatherings of amity and grace continue to grace our lives, as we uphold the spirit of Jane Austen and the timeless values she espoused.

Yours faithfully,

Lady Penfield-Krowne

P.S It is with deepest regret and sorrow that I must relate an unfortunate mishap that befell three of our esteemed guests on their journey to the tea party. Alas, the wheels of fortune turned against them, and they encountered a carriage breakdown upon the highway, which detained them throughout the dreadfully hot day. Such unexpected misfortune cast a shadow upon our gathering, for their presence was much anticipated and their absence sorely felt when their servant hastened to bring us the sorrowful news.

As we assembled in the elegant rooms, we could not help but express our concern for their wellbeing and lament their absence. The tea party's mirth and gaiety were, in part, dimmed by

the knowledge that these dear souls, known for their wit and amiable spirits, could not be with us to share in the festivities. Their names were on every tongue, and we spoke of these three unfortunate souls with fondness and affection, hoping that Providence would grant them a swift resolution to their carriage troubles. We fervently prayed for their safety and wished that their misadventure would soon be but a distant memory.

Alas, even the most delightful events are sometimes marred by unforeseen circumstances, reminding us that life's course is often as unpredictable as the plot of a captivating novel.

(Speaking of captivating novels, I momentarily set aside my normal modesty and inquire whether you have yet read the entire trilogy authored by yours truly? Lady Nancy, who was in attendance, has heartily recommended all three books, which she frequently rereads.)

Nevertheless, we pressed on, seeking solace in the company of the other delightful guests present at the tea party, and with a fond hope that fate would reunite us with our absent friends at some future occasion. For true friendship and camaraderie, like the characters in Miss Austen's beloved novels, possess a resilience that endures the trials and tribulations of life's journey.



Keep scrolling down for more of our newsletter's exciting features!



What Matters in Jane Austen? Twenty Crucial Puzzles Solved
Presentation with Professor John Mullan
Review written by Emily Smith



On Saturday, September 9th we were honored to watch a presentation with Professor John Mullan on his book *What Matters in Jane Austen? Twenty Crucial Puzzles Solved*. This was our most attended virtual event to date with 63 JASNA members from all over the continent hopping onto Zoom to take delight in the love and enthusiasm that Professor Mullan exudes when talking all things Jane Austen. Professor Mullan specially designed a presentation addressing two topics that he “foolishly left out of the book”: the way Austen’s characters think and the way they speak. Taking passages from all six novels, Professor Mullan shows how Austen doesn’t tell us what her characters are thinking or speaking, but allows us to experience how they think and speak.

If you missed this delightful presentation or would just like to experience it again, check out the video here: <https://youtu.be/ppfA20k6v8o>



JASNA Greater Phoenix Member Spotlight

Gwendolyn Basala Grey

By Elizabeth Pickens



1. Tell us what you do for a living? What attracted you to it? How does it relate to Jane Austen?

I work as a Costume Technician for theatre, film, and dance; primarily working as a Fitter/Draper and Pattern-Maker. It was actually a love of Regency era clothing that first got me interested in costume-making as a teenager; and, after getting involved in my college theatre department, I realised there were people out there earning a living as costume makers and designers, and I was determined to be one of them.

After college I spent several years working at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, both in the costume department and as a historical interpreter making military supplies such as tents, haversacks, and hunting shirts. I left Williamsburg for the University of Edinburgh, where I got my MFA in Performance Costume.

While in Scotland, I was fortunate enough to find work in film; and worked on the first two seasons of *Outlander* before family circumstances necessitated a return to the states. The next

few years were spent working as a Fitter/Draper/Pattern-maker at various Chicago theatres, before making the move out west to Arizona and a job in the ASU Theatre and Dance Costume Shop. My time there is split between working on productions and teaching costume construction, and in spite of all the sewing and pattern-making I do for work, I often spend my free time researching fashion history and making my own historical costumes just for the fun of it!

2. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a small town in the middle of Michigan called Rockford. It's a short drive from the better-known city of Grand Rapids and is the sort of quaint little place that draws in summer tourists to visit the shops and walk along the old railway line to the river dam. It was a quiet, pleasant place (which one could easily accuse of being boring) and I mainly entertained myself by spending hours at the public library; where I'd check out as many books as I could physically carry on every visit.

3. How old were you when you discovered Jane Austen? What were your first impressions of her?

My first impression of Jane Austen was when I was about fifteen, when I happened to check Mansfield Park out of the library in an endeavor to read more classics. Even now, as a devoted Jane Austen fan, I do not care very much for Mansfield Park, and as a teenager I absolutely HATED it. I thought Jane Austen must be overrated, and it wasn't until I watched (and fell in love with) the Emma Thompson version of Sense and Sensibility at the age of eighteen that I was willing to give Austen's novels another try.

4. Why do you continue to enjoy Jane Austen?

The older I get, the more I realise how well Austen understood humanity in all its foibles and motivations. Even though bound up in the strict social mores of her social class and historical era, she was able to portray a true and deep understanding of how human beings connect to each other on a multitude of levels, and how those connections play out for good or for ill!

5. What is your favorite Jane Austen novel? Movie adaptation?

My absolute favorite Jane Austen novel (and film adaptation) is, without a doubt, Persuasion. Of all the characters in Austen's novels, Sir Walter Elliott (Baronet) is SO brilliantly written as an example of the shallowness, vanity, and unfounded self-importance that still permeates the British class system to this day. Then, of course, there's the romance side of things; which explores heartbreak and the reality of living with loss and hopelessness in a way that none of her other works quite touch upon.

6. Which of the movies presents an accurate portrayal of period clothing? Are there any with inaccurate costuming?

The 1995 adaptation of *Persuasion* has, hands down, the most historically accurate Regency era costumes of all Austen film adaptations to date. Even though the costumes aren't particularly ostentatious, the use of accessories such as caps, fichus, and chemisettes, delivers an incredibly realistic depiction of the fashions of the time. Most film adaptations shy away from styles or accessories that seem fussy or frumpy to the modern eye, and *Persuasion* is one of the few films that fully embraces the un-sexy side of 1810s fashion, which just makes me love it more! The most recent adaptation of *Emma* has some wonderfully historically accurate costuming as well, but it's almost TOO pretty. The clothes are impeccable, and the hair is glossy and perfect, and everything is very... clean. I'd much prefer a petticoat or two that's six inches deep in mud. ;)

As for Austen adaptations with inaccurate costumes? Oh lord, where to start! Working in the costume industry, I don't really mind when films have historically inaccurate costumes as long as there is a cohesive design, and the costumes serve their purpose of furthering the narrative. That said, I think we all know that the Kiera Knightly version of *Pride and Prejudice* has some... interesting costume choices! The 2008 version of *Sense and Sensibility*, though an enjoyable adaptation, is also not one to watch if you want historically accurate costumes. I also have to give an honorable mention to one of my favorite Austen adaptations: the 1940 version of *Pride and Prejudice*. The movie is an absolute delight, and the costumes are extremely fun and work well with the story; but the costumes are a 1940s take on 1830s fashion and are very much not accurate to Austen's time!

7. Describe some regency costumes you have created yourself!

I've made quite a few Regency era costumes over the years! The very first costume that I ever made for myself was when I was seventeen and desperately wanting a Regency style dress. That first dress was made from horrible, slippery polyester lining fabric and sewn very, very badly! Making that dress got me hooked on Regency costumes and fashion history; and twenty years later I'm still in love with both!

I did a lot more costuming in college, and as part of my undergrad senior project I chose to make a series of dresses from 1810, 1820, 1830, and 1840 as a way to explore the drastic changes that took place in early 19th century fashion. The 1820 dress is one that I'm still proud of to this day, as it was the first garment that I sewed entirely by hand and was one of the first costumes that I patterned myself. It was an evening dress made of a light blue silk taffeta, and I based it off an extant gown that I had seen in the collection of Killerton House. I probably spent an hour in front of that dress with my sketchbook, taking notes and sketching details!

Recent projects include a hand-sewn 1810s style cotton day dress, a silk covered bonnet with a wire and buckram frame based on fashion plates from 1811 (resulting in my first ever digitized pattern!), a 1790s short-gown and petticoat, and a tailored men's evening coat from 1815-20.



8. What is the most challenging aspect of creating a period costume?

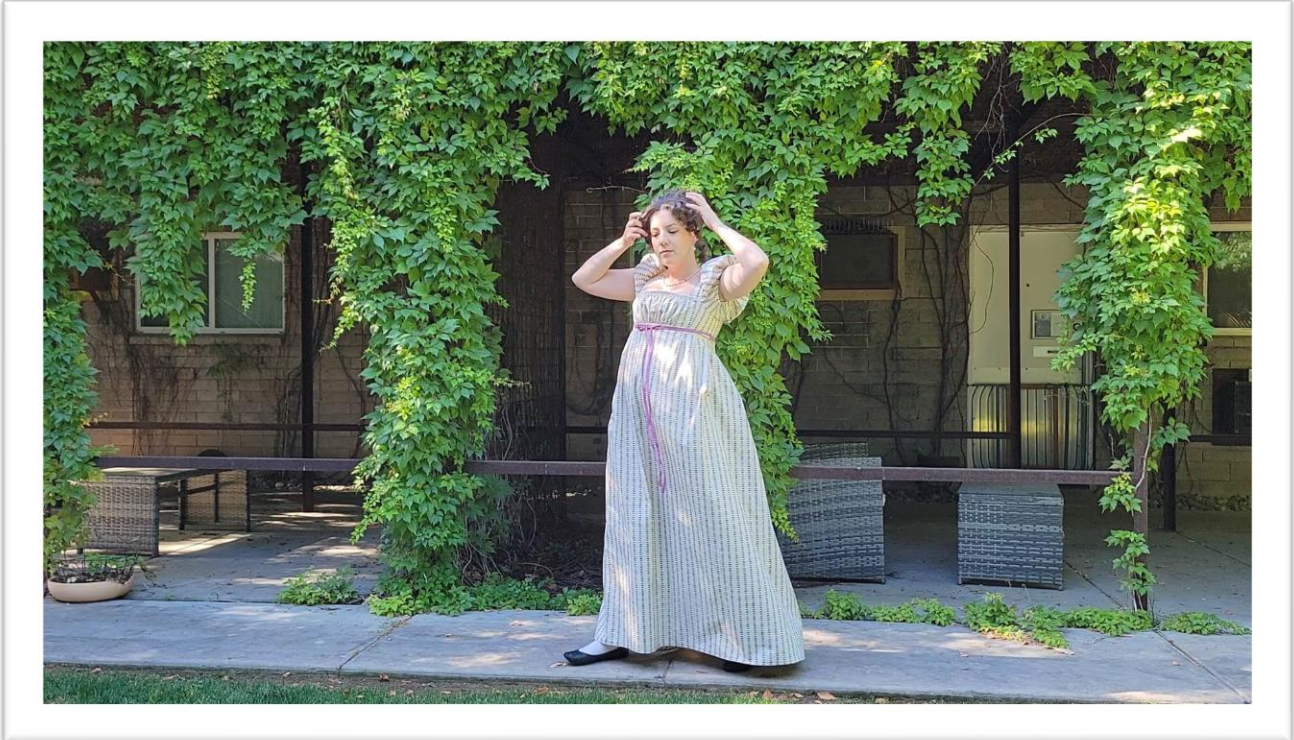
. For me, the most challenging aspect of creating a period costume is the part of the planning/engineering stage that involves deciding how the garment is going to close and how it will be finished. Will it be fully lined? Partially lined? Should I face the hem? Do I want the sleeve to gather into a band or have a drawstring? Will I fasten it with pins? Buttons? Front or back closure? Do I gather or pleat the skirt? Or both?

Aside from getting stuck in my own head, the biggest challenge when making period costumes is finding historically accurate fabric that fits my vision for a given project without costing an arm and a leg!

9.. Do you have a favorite Austen quote and what is it?

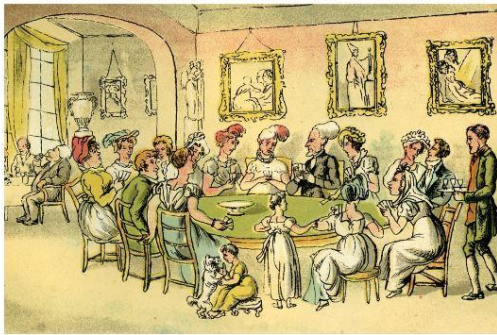
.My favorite Jane Austen quote is, unsurprisingly, from Persuasion. It contains many beautiful, quotable passages, yet my favorite has to be the simple line: “If there is anything disagreeable going on, men are always sure to get out of it.”

You can find my portfolio of costume (and art) work at my website, www.gwendolyngrey.com





Upcoming Events



Aunt Phillips' *Regency Game Night*

Saturday, October 7, 2023
6:00 - 9:00 PM

Hosted by Emily Smith — north Phoenix, near SR 51 & Shea Blvd.
Address will be sent upon response. Seating is limited, so please respond promptly.
R.s.v.p. jasnaphx@gmail.com by October 4.

Join Greater Phoenix Janeites and friends as we gather for an evening's entertainment.
Let there be whist, Regency-themed board games, pleasant company, scintillating conversation,
and much merriment for all!

"I am not born to sit still and do nothing. If I lose the game, it shall not be from not striving for it." (*Mansfield Park*)

*Regency attire always admired,
but never required.*



**Presented by the Jane Austen Society
of North America Greater Phoenix Region**

NOVEMBER TBA

Virtual Zoom Event

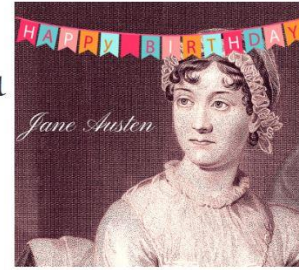
Jane Austen Birthday Tea

Saturday, December 16, 2023, 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM



at **The Pink Door Tea House**

7153 N. 59th Avenue, Glendale AZ 85301
Free Public Parking on 59th Ave. & Myrtle
or 59th Ave. & Palmaire



Learn more about the tea house here: <https://www.thepinkdoor-teahouse.com/>

We have selected the **Classic High Tea**

Gluten-free and vegetarian options available upon request.

See the menu here: <https://www.thepinkdoor-teahouse.com/menu-afternoon-tea/>

See the tea selections here: <https://www.thepinkdoor-teahouse.com/tea-selection/>

R.s.v.p. jasnaphx@gmail.com by December 9.

Regency attire always admired, but never required.
Come and toast our dear Jane on her birthday!



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of North America
Greater Phoenix Region