



David Jorgensen rolling a hoop; Treasurer Chris Cassidy celebrating success at bilbocatch

Udolpho, and the Gothic Tradition,” followed by an in-depth look at “*Persuasion* and the Romantic Movement” in April. We ended the season with a film night, viewing the 2007 version of *Persuasion*.

Kate Jorgensen has been elected to serve alongside Co-RC Susan Harris-Gamard after longtime RC Brown retires from her role at the end of the 2024–2025 academic year. The trio will share co-RC responsibilities in the meantime.

New York, Metro

In May, we hosted a two-part meeting on “The Business of Her Life: Social Mobility and Gentlewomen’s Labor in Austen-Era Britain.” Catherine Keohane—associate director of teaching and learning in the Office for Faculty Excellence at Montclair State University—spoke about “Late 18th Century Models of Women’s Charity,” including Emma and Anne Elliot. Elizabeth Porter, assistant professor of English at the City University of New York, discussed “Austen’s London,” arguing that Austen’s engagement with London is key to understanding her life and literature.

In June, we enjoyed a delicious pub lunch and lively conversation when artist Georgie Castilla and writer Emma Kantor joined us to discuss Castilla’s forthcoming graphic-novel adaptation of *Emma*. A New York-based graphic artist, lyricist, and costume designer, and founder of Duniath Comics, Castilla shared his illustrations and creative process with us. He also discussed his early introduction to and continued love of Austen and his belief in the importance of adaptations to bringing new people to the author’s works.

North Carolina

In April, Sue Scott delivered an expanded version of her insightful and entertaining 2023 AGM breakout talk, “Is My Idiolect Showing? Individualized Speech Patterns in Austen’s Novels.” Her presentation revealed

how social conventions of personal address, pet and slang words, pronoun use, and sentence length in characters’ direct speech illuminate their character and how we as readers should perceive them. We had an outing in May to Filament Coffee + Tea in Mebane to sample its Austen-inspired spring menu and enjoy each other’s company.



North Carolina members at the May tea

Conversation topics included Eudora Welty and linguistics, the 200th anniversary of passenger railroads, engaging talks from AGMs, and, of course, Jane Austen!

In June, our virtual book club read *The Watsons* and our discussion centered on character types, plot situations, and themes that Austen “recycled” and further developed in later works. Its main character, Emma Watson, was lauded as a heroine, and we had fun exploring traits she had in common with other Austen heroines.

Oregon, Southern

In May, we welcomed Jane Austen Society of Australia President Susannah Fullerton via Zoom. She provided a marvelous introduction and personal recollections of her friendship with the late Jon Spence as we prepared for our discussion of his scrupulously researched book *Becoming Jane Austen: A Life*. We discussed how different and more thought-provoking this biography is compared to many others as we discovered how the influence of Tom LeFroy and the exotic Eliza De Feuillide subtly surfaced in Austen’s work. Fullerton said that the 2007 film starring Anne Hathaway based on Spence’s book did not do justice to his excellent scholarship and meticulous eye for detail. Our discussion continued with readings from *The Loiterer*—the lively, satirical, and observational weekly commentaries published by James and Henry Austen during their days at Oxford.

Our early June outing took us to Dos Mariposas Lavender Farms and Winery, where we spent the afternoon overlooking the vibrantly blooming fields and willow-draped pond. After lunch, we held a roundtable presentation of an Austen-themed fan fiction, scholarship, or Austen-adjacent book of our choice. We ran out of time but will continue this fascinating exploration of the immense body of work inspired by Austen’s life and time.

Oregon/Southwest Washington

We held our annual spring tea on “Regency-Era Conjuring,” organized by RC Vonnie Alto, at the Pioneer Adult Community Center in Oregon City. Historical conjurer and natural philosopher D. R. Schreiber performed an audience-participatory, one-hour magic show on history, scientific