

The Burney Society UK Newsletter Winter 2019

Season's Greetings to all our members



Thomas Moule (1784 – 1851), Extract from 'Surrey', Engraved for *Moules' English Counties* (1830) by W. Smollinger (Reproduced Courtesy of T. Messent)

Dear Burney members,

As we head for the festive season and the end of another interesting year for Burney events, we hope you enjoy reading our final newsletter for this year.

In 2019 successful Burney events included the Burney Conference in Lincoln with papers from international Burney scholars.

This autumn we organised and sponsored a talk by Jocelyn Harris, Emeritus Professor at Otago University on connections between the Burney and Austen families. This talk was hosted by Chawton House and renews our historical links to this important literary venue. We hope to foster this in coming years, partly by our appeal to fund a bench in Chawton House grounds dedicated to Frances Burney.

We alerted members recently to the radio play by Sian Ejiwunmi-Le Berre about Burney and Germaine de Staël and this newsletter include links and some reviews. We recently met the playwright at the WSG seminar at which Francesca gave her paper 'Below and Beyond. On Re-reading Burney's Biographies' and hope this could lead to one of many creative initiatives related to Burney scholarship.

Next year also promises to be an exciting one for Burney enthusiasts as illustrated by the number and variety of forthcoming Burney events in 2020 detailed below. We hope you enjoy reading on, and that you have a restful and happy Christmas. We look forward to seeing you next year, and we are always happy to hear from you!

By Miriam Al Jamil, Chair, Burney Society UK

Burney Society UK Fundraising Appeal

A Bench to Commemorate Frances Burney at Chawton House, Hampshire

The Burney Society UK and the North American Burney Society plan to jointly sponsor an elegant Lutyens-inspired bench, dedicated to Frances Burney, inscribed with her name and a quotation, in the grounds of Chawton House. This project is in line with our Constitutional aims to promote Burney and would contribute to our renewed and thriving relationship with Chawton House.



A Lutyens- inspired Bench was selected as Sir Edwin Lutyens designed terraces for Chawton House



Location 16

The Burney Bench will be at Location 16 which is in the Rose Garden by the North Wall. It would be one of 30 benches, sponsored by different groups, to be installed in the grounds. These locations have been selected to provide seating for visitors to Chawton House Grounds, particularly those following the 'Austen Trail'. Location 16 is well positioned, facing the rose garden, near to the gravel path where it leads into the walled garden. (See adjacent plan of grounds)

We are looking forward to giving the Burneys a tangible presence at Chawton House and celebrating the joint mission of our two Burney Societies! The aim is to meet our Burney Society UK target contribution by the end of January 2020. If you would like to support this project you can contribute by:

- sending a Cheque made payable to the **Burney Society UK** (writing 'Burney Bench' on the reverse) to Dr Deborah Jones, 18 Savoy Court, Bimport, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 8BN
- or
- making a Bank transfer to **NatWest a/c 83156410, sort code 600113** marking the payment 'Burney Bench'

Please also let us know about any contribution you make by email to - burneysocietyuk@gmail.com (ideally with a 'cc' to deborahjark@aol.com (our Treasurer)

If you have any questions about this project please email us - burneysocietyuk@gmail.com

By Trudie Messent on Behalf of the Burney Society UK Committee

Burney Scholarship Autumn 2019

13 October 2019: Jocelyn Harris talk 'Satire, Celebrity, & Politics in Jane Austen'

The Burney Society UK is delighted to have facilitated and sponsored this extremely successful talk by Professor Jocelyn Harris, Emeritus Professor, Otago University, New Zealand. It was very well attended by an appreciative audience in the Great Hall at Chawton House, Hampshire, a most appropriate venue for a talk which explored the possible connections between the Austen and Burney circles and how this may have influenced Jane Austen.

Jocelyn stressed the extent to which Jane Austen admired Frances Burney and cited plots and characters in Austen novels which closely paralleled instances in Burney's life. Jocelyn suggested that Austen would have heard gossip about the Burneys from her mother's cousin, Mrs. Cooke, who lived across the road from the d'Arblays at Great Bookham and became friends with Frances d'Arblay and her sister Susan, who lived at Mickleham. Even before meeting Frances, Mrs. Cooke may have heard about her life at Court through the letters Frances wrote to her sister Susan and a local friend, Mrs. Locke, who lived at Norbury Park.

**Mrs Cooke
Frances d' Arblay
& family lived in
Gt. Bookham**

**Mrs Locke
lived at
Norbury Park**



**Detail from 'Surrey' extract
above (Moule 1830)**

**Susan Burney
lived in Mickleham**

Jocelyn recounted parallels between the Burneys and Austen's *Mansfield Park*. in Jocelyn's words, 'Think Fanny and Susan Burney, Fanny and Susan Price'. Jocelyn outlined the parallels between the lives of the fictional Fanny Price and Frances Burney such as that they were both removed from a pleasurable life within their families and sent into an environment in which they were lonely, Frances at Court, Fanny to Mansfield Park. They were both extremely shy and hesitant, 'speaking little but thinking much'.

Jocelyn further suggested that the character of Mr. Price, Fanny's father, who is portrayed as a 'drunken and brutal Lieutenant of Marines' in *Mansfield Park*, is arguably Austen's satire on James Burney's colleague and friend Lieutenant Molesworth Phillips of the Royal Marines who Jocelyn described as 'a drunken and brutal husband to Susan Burney'. Another interesting parallel drawn by Jocelyn is between Fanny Price's concern at the elopement of Mr Crawford and Mrs. Rushworth in *Mansfield Park* and the distress and concern experienced within the Burney family when Sarah Harriet Burney went to live with her half-brother James. Jocelyn noted that Dr Burney jumped immediately to the conclusion of incest, whilst Frances referred to his "rash selfishness".

Jocelyn went on to outline how Warren Hastings forms a link between Burney and Austen. The connections between Hastings and the Austen families were strong and numerous, dating back to the seventeenth

century, for example, Hastings became godfather to Jane's cousin in India, Eliza Hancock, later Feuillde, later Mrs Henry Austen. Burney was an adamant supporter of Hastings and frequently attended the Warren Hastings trial in 1788, being given tickets by many acquaintances, including Queen Charlotte. Jocelyn detailed evidence of Burney's interest in the Hastings trial to the Cookes, and potentially to Austen, with Burney writing after Hastings acquittal in April 1795 that the Cookes were delighted.



Professor Jocelyn Harris at Chawton House

Professor Jocelyn Harris explores in detail the parallels between Austen and the Burney family, as well as other notables, such as the Duke of Clarence in her book, *Satire, Celebrity, & Politics in Jane Austen*, (Bucknell University Press, 2017, 2018)

The Burney Society UK would like to thank Professor Harris for her excellent talk and for tailoring it so perfectly to the interests of members of the Burney Society.

By Trudie Messent

+++++

5 November 2019: Dr Deborah Jones talk on 'The Brilliant Burneys'

For an online interview with Dr Jones, Treasurer and Membership Secretary about this talk please see

<https://www.yourvalleynews.co.uk/featured/the-brilliant-burneys-stars-of-the-18th-century/>

+++++

7 November 2019: 'When Fanny met Germaine', BBC 4 Radio play

We hope many of you were able to hear Sian Ejiwunmi-Le Berre's BBC Radio 4 play based around Frances Burney and Germaine de Staël. Below there is: a link to the BBC4 radio play; a link to an article by Katy Evans-Bush; an account by Sian of how she came to write the play; an extract from a review by Kate Chisholm from *The Spectator* and a further review by Roger Massie, both Burney Society members.

- Link to Radio 4 'When Fanny met Germaine' - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0009yxj>
- Link to Burney Society UK Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/474331835923929/> with an excellent article by Katy Evans-Bush which Sian has uploaded.

Sian Ejiwunmi-Le Berre wrote to the Burney Society UK: It goes without saying what a huge Burney fan I am. I first encountered her during my degree, but later went on to study for an MA in Literature and Society 1700 -1820 at QMW. There's huge focus on her dramatic life these days, but I feel her writings have become unpopular for no good reason. I have a little dream of adapting *The Wanderer* one day.

I'm not quite sure when the Juniper Hall period came to my attention, but it certainly stuck in my mind. The idea of these two intellectual giants, meeting, intimate neighbours... what did they discuss? I can't help but feel that if it had been their male equivalents, we'd have a wealth of correspondence and commentary on the encounter. There are many books, certainly, and many comparisons have been made between the two women's lives, but less than there should be: the exchange of ideas was momentous I think. Somehow, they seem to have merged their ideas about writing - Germaine became more Fanny and novelish, Fanny struggled I think to embrace Germaine's more intellectual approach and perhaps the effect on her writing was not so fortuitous!

So there were two aspects to the encounter that interested me: the literariness of it, but even more, what it said about the effect of economic class on women's writing. Germaine knows that she is born to write. Fanny knows she must write to live - the royal pension was barely enough for her to live on as an independent woman. Germaine's freedom to write anything she wanted is a purchased liberty. How much of Fanny's horror of scandal, her growing prissiness really, had to do with the manner in which as a woman, her earning capacity was wrapped up in her reputation for absolute propriety. Enter romantic love, and the differences between the two women become even more exposed. Germaine's wealth bought her an element of sexual licence and licence she certainly took. Fanny couldn't afford to marry the man she loves - without writing. Finally the awful crux - Germaine's scandalous sexual reputation would have such a terrible effect on Fanny's that it would risk her pension, and cool her literary audience... making marriage impossible. Here were two women who should love each other, and were being prevented from doing so by "the world". The parallels and tensions around love and money seemed irresistible to me, and incredibly "novelish". As I was constructing the story, the story was deconstructing the romantic novel. Because both Fanny and Germaine have some blind spots in terms of their own self awareness, and because that's where the fun lies, I needed an insider to narrate the story. Enter Louise Marie. You'll know better than I do that a certain Louise-Marie (I've forgotten her surname) was present as a witness at Fanny and D'Arblay's second marriage at the Sicilian church. Clearly French, she's mentioned nowhere else in the diaries or any accounts of the time. She's an emigre, but she's a Nobody. One of Germaine's first short novels was the story of an enslaved African woman called Mirza: she was very interested in issues of race... and then we have *The Wanderer*. I put these facts together and gave Germaine a very clever maid, interested in novel writing, wrestling with the "romance" between Fanny and Germaine and humorously appalled when it goes awry.

Well, writing a radio play has been an education! 44 minutes is not very long, and there has been some ruthless scything - twice as long would barely give me space to tell the tale. Whole scenes have fallen by the wayside, favourite passages and conversations have been cut. You'll forgive the inaccuracies and omissions that have arisen out of truncating the narrative, and some of the mangled quotes and summarisations. I very much started with Germaine and Fanny's own words - turns out they speak a little fine for an afternoon audience! But a little of them remains I hope, and that momentous year when Fanny was so fragile after her Windsor years, and yet made such a powerful decision to take her own life into her hands. That it required the "frumping" of Germaine is something that always make me a little sad.

Excerpt of Kate Chishom's review: 'When Fanny met Germaine', from *The Spectator*

When Fanny Met Germaine (last week's Thursday-afternoon drama on 4, sharply directed by Jonquil Panting) is a clever telling of the real-life encounter between the English novelist Frances Burney and the French writer and heroine of the revolution Germaine de Staël. Burney, aged 41 and very much on the shelf, is staying with her sister Susannah in the Surrey hills after finally escaping from her tortuous days at court in service to Queen Charlotte. De Staël, still only 26, has escaped from Paris with her lover, the Count Narbonne, abandoning her husband, the Swedish ambassador, and her children, and setting up a community of French exiles in an English country house, Juniper Hall.

They are such a mismatch of minds, Frances, always hyper-conscious of her indeterminate social status and unwilling to jeopardise her royal pension by consorting with a revolutionary and adulteress ('You don't visit them?' she questions Susannah, 'Unchaperoned?'); Germaine, clever, free-thinking, aristocratic in every fibre of her being, and, to Fanny's dismay, uncorseted. It's rich material for comedy, with which the writer Sian Ejiwunmi-Le Berre (new to radio) makes merry. But more impressive is her thoughtful use of the medium, inventing an African servant, Louise-Marie (played by Lorna Gayle), for Germaine, who fills in the history for us and drives the narrative along with her cheeky insights and ribald commentary. It's a lively character study of both women, faithful to what we know of them from their diaries.

+++++

Roger Massie Review: 'When Fanny met Germaine', BBC 4 Radio play (7 Nov 2019)

Rather faithfully and most humourously based on 1793/4, the most momentous year of Fanny's life, written and dramatised by Sian Ejiwunmi- Le Berre, the play offered much to delight Burneyites, even if others might have been left scratching their heads.

The author is inspired to give this self-styled 'romp' a compère/commère (?) in Marie-Louise, Germaine De Staël's black maid/newly-liberated slave, from the French West-Indian colony of San Domingo. Shakespeare, after all, famously gave us down-to-earth maids commenting on young love (not so very young in the case of our Fanny). The scene shifts between the Chelsea home of our heroine's tyrannical musicologist father and ghastly hypochondriac step-mother, to Germaine's nest of Gallic love (and revolution) at Juniper Hall in the leafy Surrey village of Mickleham, home of sister Susan. In a nutshell, Fanny 'gets Junipered', which involves fighting off the amorous advances of the scandalously-liberated Germaine – whose lover, ex-Minister of War, le comte de Narbonne, is tiring of her charms - while accepting those of his brother-in-arms, ex-General Alexandre d'Arblay, her penniless Surrey language student, who, lacking a cab-fare, carries his present of a rose bush the mere 30 miles to Chelsea.

By marrying Alexandre, the immigrant from war-torn France, the timid Fanny, cocks a snook at her father, who refuses to attend her marriage in Mickleham Church, her brother standing in, while showing business acumen in attracting subscriptions for her new novel from her host of admirers in literary and artistic circles, including a 'young Miss Austen', whose talents she had encouraged – even coming up with a title : *Pride and Prejudice*.

November 23 2019: Francesca Saggini paper 'Below and Beyond: On re-reading Burney's Biographies'

In her paper, given at a well-attended Women's Studies Group seminar at the Foundling Museum, Francesca Saggini considered the biographies of and by Frances Burney from the eighteenth century to the present. She began by stating that her own collection includes 'bad' biographies of Burney to identify which facts about her are considered important and which are bogus. She noted that stages of Burney's life are usually interspersed with the dates of her novels and that her father, Charles Burney, always has a strong presence. The British Library site *All Discovering Literature* offers a different story. It begins with the publication of *Evelina* and *Cecilia*, and moves through her 'marriage and illness' and then her 'wider literary career and impact': <https://www.bl.uk/people/frances-burney>

Burney was always aware of publicity. Francesca quoted Anna Laetitia Barbauld's 1784 letter to her brother, in which she expressed her desire to meet Burney whose fame was equal only to the celebrated Lunardi's balloon and whose second portrait by Edward Francesco Burney is likely to have referenced this fashion by including a 'balloon' hat: The ribbons on the hat and chest in the portrait signify 'head' or rationality and 'heart' or emotion.



Frances Burney © National Portrait Gallery

Francesca considered Burney's subtle manipulation of her image as author and examined her statement in *Memoirs of Dr. Charles Burney, Arranged from his own Manuscripts...* (1832) that when she heard that Dr. Johnson had advised Mrs. Thrale to read *Evelina*, she danced with joy round 'a large old mulberry tree'. Francesca proposed that the 'cultural capital' of the mulberry tree connected Burney to celebrated authorship, particularly to Shakespeare, whose garden had a mulberry tree which was famously felled in 1756 to discourage visitors.

Francesca looked at Victorian attitudes to biography, at a time when diaries were mostly written by men and seen as 'vain ambition' in women when a new sentimentality dominated popular literature. This was when Burney's diaries and letters were first published, edited by Charlotte Barrett in seven volumes (1842-46). Francesca asked, why did Burney write them? They are not a spiritual biography or a domestic record and not a chronicle as such. An anonymous review in 1854 stated that after Burney married, she was 'no more than any other middle-aged lady'.

A 1957 *Spectator* article by Derek Hudson stated that she 'left her genius in the eighteenth century', and in 1962 a TLS review complained of her 'exhibitionist self-consciousness' and lack of true modesty. This dismissal of her as a writer prevailed until recently. However, presentation of her work still raises questions. Francesca ended with images of twentieth and twenty-first century editions of Burney's books which favour pink and floral cover designs, and a Fragonard painting on the latest 2019 edition of *Evelina*.



Professor Francesca Saggini presenting her paper for the Women's Studies Group 1558-1837 Seminar, The Foundling Museum, London. Photo: T Messent

<https://womensstudiesgroup.org/>

<https://foundlingmuseum.org.uk/>

Review by Miriam Al Jamil

+++++

9 December 2019: Frances Burney's *The Witlings* at Chawton House Reading Group



This month Burney Society Committee members Miriam Al Jamil and Trudie Messent were very pleased the Chawton House Reading group discussion was on *The Witlings*, a comedy by Frances Burney. It was agreed that the physical comedy elements of this play would make it very suitable for a modern audience. Any playwrights/ producers keen to take this on?

Has your Reading group studied a Burney novel or play? Perhaps you can suggest one? Please let us know -

burneysocietyuk@gmail.com

by Trudie Messent (with apologies for the photo glare!)

BURNEY SCHOLARSHIP 2020

Launch of Research Project on the correspondence of Mary Hamilton, including material relevant to Burney research.

Sophie Coulombeau writes: On **1 December 2019**, a three-year project launched that will bring a huge amount of eighteenth-century bluestocking correspondence - some of it concerning Frances Burney and her father - into the public realm. 'Unlocking the Mary Hamilton Papers' is an ambitious project based at the John Rylands Library in Manchester, and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It aims to digitise the huge archive of the courtier and socialite Mary Hamilton (1756-1816), which is presently scattered over eleven libraries in Britain and the USA. It also aims to explore research questions on reading, letter-writing, language practices and the role of social networks in Georgian England. The seven-strong project team, drawn from the disciplines of linguistics, history and literary studies, includes two members of the Burney Society Committee, Dr Sophie Coulombeau and Dr Cassandra Ulph.

You can find out more about Mary Hamilton [here](#) - and a full project website will be coming soon.

+++++

January 8 2020: Professor Peter Sabor “Editing Frances Burney’s Journals and Letters, 1972-2019.” BSECS Annual Conference, St. Hugh’s College, Oxford

The BSECS conference is open to members of BSECS and associated organisations. This paper by Professor Peter Sabor is scheduled for Panel 9 ‘Behn, Walpole and Burney: Scholarly Editions of Texts from the Long Eighteenth Century’ in the MGA Lecture Room (Mary Gray Allen Building) on Wednesday January 8, Session 1 from 1:30-15:00. For further information and registration see the BSECS Annual conference page <https://www.bsecs.org.uk/conferences/annual-conference/>

+++++

January 16 2020: Professor Francesca Saggini seminar, “Opening Romantic Drama: Reimagining Frances Burney’ as part of the Glasgow Theatre Seminars.

Francesca is currently affiliate staff, Theatre Studies, School of Culture and Creative Arts, University of Glasgow. email us on burneysocietyuk@gmail.com and we will direct your enquiry to Professor Saggini.

+++++

2020 Burney Society UK AGM

Our next AGM will be held on **31st October 2020 at 2 pm. The venue this year is the Ground Floor Study Studio, The Foundling Museum, 40 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ**

After the AGM, Madeleine Pelling, our 2018 Bursary winner will give a talk based on her research. AGM attendees will also be able to access the Foundling Museum, including any Exhibitions, free of charge for the day. Booking details will be provided nearer the date.

+++++

2019-2020 Burney Society UK Bursary Winner

The Bursary winner's name is Reetta Sippola. She's a PhD student in Cultural History at the University of Turku, Finland and her thesis title is 'The embodied observations on the Cook voyages'. As part of the project, she's interested in James Burney's writings and the ways they reflect on the processes of observing and creating new knowledge during the second and third Cook voyages in the 1770s. She wants to look at 'the practices of the daily observations of a seaman with a particular focus on the bodily experiencing and sensory aspects of his work', and the Bursary will be used to consult Burney's logs and journals held in the National Archives and the British Library.

By Dr Gillian Skinner

+++++

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Burney Society (North America) Biannual Conference:

“Burney Studies: Appraising the Past, Anticipating the Future”

July 3-4, 2020, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Featured Plenary: Prof. Francesca Saggini,

author of *Backstage in the Novel: Frances Burney and the Theatre Arts* (Charlottesville, U of Virginia P, 2010)
speaking on **“The Artificial Author: The Many Lives of Frances Burney, Madame d’Arblay”**

Registration and Accommodations

Registration details will be sent to members early in 2020. The two-day conference will take place in downtown Montreal: on Friday in the Rare Books Room of the McLennan Library (home of The Burney Centre) of McGill University, and on Saturday in the Mount Royal Room at the Best Western Ville-Marie Hotel a few steps away, and will cost USD\$200, including a conference dinner with wine on Friday; Saturday’s breakfast, lunch, and coffee breaks; and a Saturday Burney-themed concert by Infusion Baroque. \$ Rooms at the special rate of Can\$205 per night, plus taxes, for single or double, between July 2 and July 5, 2020, are now available for booking at the Best Western. This special rate will be available until May 2, 2020. Call 1-800-361-7791 and ask for the “Burney Society” room block, or go to www.hotelvillemarie.com, enter your dates and the group code “Burney,” and select your room.

For more information on this Conference see <https://mcgill.ca/burneycentre/conferences-and-events>

Reminder: We have previously published the CfP for this conference. Deadline is 1 January 2020

Professor Francesca Saggini writes: Looking forward to 2021

I propose to host a panel on Sian Ejiwunmi-Le Berre's 'When Fanny Met Germaine' at the NASSR / BARS conference in **August 2021**. No website up yet with a link. Sian hopes to be able to participate in the panel as a speaker, commitments permitting. Peter Sabor has kindly accepted to chair the panel. More details once the official Conference CFP is out.

+++++

Dr Deborah Jones, our Treasurer and Membership Secretary has a question for members. She writes:

Hi Burneyites, I have just read, in a book about Mozart, that a German dramatist, Schroeder, dramatised FB's Evelina in 1784 under the title Viktorine, a 'tone drama', and scored a great success with it. Can anyone tell me more about this? Curious!

Prof. Saggini responded: The author you refer to is Friedrich Ludwig Schröder, who was a German actor and dramatist very active in disseminating English plays in Germany at the end of the XVIII cent. Just to name one, he contributed significantly to the popularity of Shakespeare. Here a basic BIO summary from the web. https://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Friedrich_Ludwig_Schr%C3%B6der As you will see, Viktorine oder Wohlthun trägt Zinsen is mentioned, too. If you would like to read a copy in German they are available to download.

Do any of you have anything to add concerning this play or other translations?

Please email burneysocietyuk@gmail.com or Dr Jones at deborahjark@aol.com

+++++

Burney Society Links

<http://burneysociety.uk/> website <https://twitter.com/burneysocietyuk?lang=en-gb> Twitter

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/474331835923929/>

We would be delighted to hear from you. Please email us at burneysocietyuk@gmail.com

+++++

Membership

Membership subscriptions were due in June. The 2019-2020 Renewal form can be found on the next page.

For any Burney Society UK membership enquiries please contact our Membership Secretary, Deborah Jones, by email at deborahjark@aol.com

The Burney Society UK

Membership application and Renewal 2019– 2020

Title(s).....Name(s).....

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....Telephone.....

Email.....

I wish to join / renew (please circle as appropriate):

- Individual membership of £20 yes
- Joint membership of £25 (for couples at the same address) yes
- Student membership of £15 yes

METHOD OF PAYMENT

- **Bank transfer to NatWest a/c 83156410, sort code 600113** yes
- or Cheque made payable to the Burney Society UK yes
- I am setting up a Standing Order or Direct Debit yes

giftaid it

I am a UK Taxpayer and wish to Gift Aid my fee/donation yes

I understand that by my membership I agree to receiving correspondence and materials in relation to the Society and accept that my data is kept in password controlled, safe keeping and is not made available to any other organisation.

SIGNATURE

Post this to: (Treasurer and Membership Secretary): Dr Deborah Jones, 18 Savoy Court, Bimport, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 8BN Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you would like to receive your membership card by post, otherwise acknowledgement will be by email. **Members who renew by bank transfer or direct debit do not need to post this form. Please email with any change of details to deborahjark@aol.com**