

## The Burney Society UK Newsletter Summer 2020



### Greetings to all our members

In this Summer newsletter, we include updates on planned Burney events and items drawn from a wider eighteenth-century background. In response to the present situation, we include an account of the history of St Paul's Church, Deptford pending our postponed visit, and a Burney Family 'Isolation' Quotes Quiz. The Godmersham virtual library promoted by our Society President, Prof. Peter Sabor, seems particularly relevant at present. A long-term Burney Society and former Committee member, Helen Cooper has written an interesting report on a recent Shelley-focused event in her area. There is an updated review of the Chawton House 'ManUp' as this is now available online. We include links to the Chawton House 'Lockdown Literary Festival' Talks as some are still available on Youtube. A list of online resources, Burney related and of more general interest, have been collated for your perusal.

We are as always interested to hear from you. What have you been reading or researching during the current lockdown? Are you finally tackling *The Wanderer*?! Do you have interesting links to share?

Meanwhile, look after yourselves and keep in touch.

We hope to see you soon. Miriam and the Committee

### Updates from Spring 2020 Newsletter

The present situation has forced us to update information which we provided in our last newsletter. These are the major changes of which you should be advised. **We will keep you updated on re-arranged dates and times via our Newsletters and website [www.burneysociety.uk](http://www.burneysociety.uk)**

### Postponed or potentially postponed Burney Society Events

- **Visit to St Paul's Church, Deptford (no longer 13 June 2020). This event has been postponed until 2021. A date has not yet been arranged but we will advise members by Newsletter and update the website**
- **Annual General Meeting (planned for 31 October 2020 at The Foundling Museum) Date to be advised.**
- **North American Burney Society Conference in Montreal (no longer 3-4 July 2020). We have received notice from their President that this has been postponed. We have not yet been advised of revised dates.**

## Charles Burney Jnr and Thomas Archer

by Miriam Al Jamil



Our visit to St. Paul's Church Deptford, to be rescheduled in 2021, celebrates two individuals who were connected through place and through the fact that their achievements were overshadowed by older men, in Burney's case by his father, and in Archer's case by renowned architects Sir John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor.

**St Paul's Church, Deptford.**  
**Photo: Trudie Messent**

**Charles Burney** (1757-1817) is perhaps best known to members of the Burney Society as the Cambridge student who was caught red-handed with stolen books from the University Library. Margaret Anne Doody saw this as a calculated act of defiance against his father. (Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works*, CUP, 1988, 20). He taught at and later ran a school in Hammersmith and then Greenwich, was ordained a deacon in the Church of England in 1807 and later gained the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1812 and became rector of Herne Hill in Kent and St. Paul's, Deptford.



**Bust of Charles Burney Jr. St Paul's Church, Deptford** Photo: T Messent

Visits to the Burney family at Deptford are recorded in diaries by different members of the family. Frances made prolonged stays before returning to France, and on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 1812<sup>1</sup>, Sarah Harriet Burney wrote:

My dearest Brother, I must make use of this little corner, to entreat that, if you ever invite me to Deptford, it may on no account be whilst that disagreeable person, Sister d'Arblay is with you!

Ever most affectionately yours

S.H. Burney

Kindest love  
To <sup>Mrs</sup> Burney.

<sup>1</sup> Sarah Harriet Burney, *The Letters of Sarah Harriet Burney*, Edited by Lorna J. Clark (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1997) Letter 70. With Frances (Burney) d'Arblay to Charles Burney Jr., p. 169.

Charles' book collecting and his religious faith were commemorated together on his memorial tablet in Westminster Abbey after his death in 1817,

'His diligence was worthy a man thoroughly learned, in collecting a library, which was so rich in manuscriptal writings and published works, that after the mournful death of the professor, it was bought at the public cost and placed in the British Museum, by order of the English Parliament. But what shone most brightly in Burney was an intense affection for the Church of England, a hope of salvation piously founded in Christ, and a habit chaste and sincere, of venerating God'.



**North West View of St Paul's Church, Deptford. 1750. Print Engraving. British Library Add. MS 32360 f. 131**

**Thomas Archer** (1668-1743) was the architect of St. Paul's, Deptford which is one of fifty-one churches commissioned in London after the Great Fire of 1666, although only twelve were constructed. It was built between 1712 and 1730. Archer was responsible for some great baroque building projects. Documented examples include the north wing of Chatsworth House, Derbyshire; Roehampton House, and Harcourt house, Cavendish Square in London; Hurstbourne Priors, and Hale Park (his own house), Hampshire; and the Churches of St. Philip's, Birmingham and St. John's, Smith Square, Westminster. It is suggested that Archer would be better known and acclaimed, were it not for the fact that he was a near contemporary of two of the greatest architects of the early seventeenth century, Sir John Vanbrugh (1664-1726) and Nicholas Hawksmoor (1661-1736). The Duke of Shrewsbury supported his application for the post of Comptroller of the Works, with responsibility for the Church commissions, and wrote in 1711: '...he is the most able and has the best genius for building of anyone we have, and by my own experience dare assure you he is so perfectly honest that I am certain the Queen would save considerably if he were in that employment.' However, only in 1715 was the post filled, by Vanbrugh. You can judge his abilities for yourself when we meet at St. Paul's!

## Burney Family 'Isolation Quotes' Quiz

by Trudie Messent

Can you match these Burney family members to their 'isolation' quote? If so, please email your answers to [burneysocietyuk@gmail.com](mailto:burneysocietyuk@gmail.com) Sources and answers will be provided in our next Newsletter.

*[...] - the room meant for a drawing room, but in which we sleep till another is finished, is large and lofty - but very dark as is the parlour, having only one window, & that small - [...] The country around is flat, & I think very dreary - some little hills appear at a distance, 3 spires, and the sea w<sup>ch</sup> is a grand object, but one which by no means raises my spirits to behold - it is at about a mile & half distance from us - [...]*

*[...] I now feel the solitude of my situation more keenly than I almost ever did before. However, for the present, I must be resigned; and if I could but settle my mind sufficiently to become industrious as I was last winter, I should live in a little ideal world of my own, and care nothing about the humdrum of surrounding realities. -*



*The Land hereabouts is high and mountainous and has the most forlorn and desolate appearance imaginable being a continued lump of Rock without Tree or Bush, what little soil there is, is too rotten to bear a Man's weight.*



*The poor man is in despair - at the immense distance from his family and the confusion of his affairs here, among strangers. I tremble for him and can do him no kind of good, but his case renders me unfit for anything either of business or pleasure. I staid at home the whole day and may well say, 'Diem perdidit', for it has been of no use to any one. [...] My spirits have not been so much sunk as now, since I left England.*

*My Windows, I ought to have mentioned, being in the front of the House, enable me, when-ever I please, to see all passers or - re-passers from & to the Lodge; they look immediately upon the Lawn before the House, which is limited by an Iron railing, on the outside of which is the Walk that leads to the terrace. I have therefore all the amusement that [...] affords of the staring species, for all the Company that goes thither, pass before me: though distant enough never to be troublesome to me.*

## North American Society *Burney Letter* Call for Submissions

by Ashley Schoppe

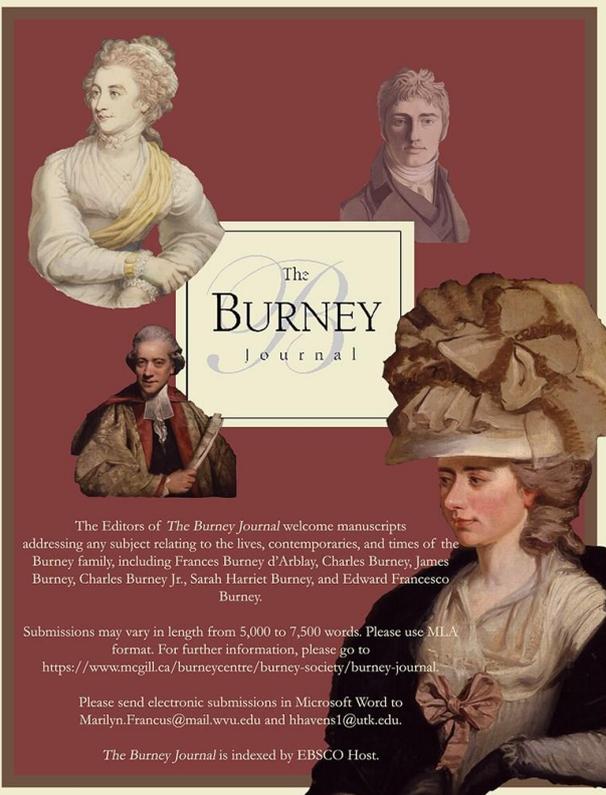
*The Burney Journal* is now accepting submissions for volume 17, to be published in late 2020, and for subsequent issues to be published annually. A peer-reviewed publication of the Burney Society, *The Burney Journal* is available in print and indexed online by EBSCO Host.

*The Burney Journal* is dedicated to the study of the works of the Burney family, especially Frances Burney d'Arblay, her life, her contemporaries, and her times. This annual, interdisciplinary publication invites submissions on all aspects of the Burneys' lives and careers, in a variety of disciplines including literature, history, art, music, and politics. The aims of the journal center on supporting and advocating for eighteenth-century studies broadly, and particularly author studies, women's studies, and cultural studies.

Submissions for volume 17 are due September 15, 2020, and manuscripts must be submitted electronically directly to the editors (Marilyn Francus [[marilyn.francus@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:marilyn.francus@mail.wvu.edu)] and Hilary Havens [[hhavens1@utk.edu](mailto:hhavens1@utk.edu)]). We accept submissions that vary in length from 5,000 to 7,500 words. Submissions must follow MLA guidelines and the journal style sheet:

[https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/files/burneycentre/the\\_burney\\_journal\\_stylesheet.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/files/burneycentre/the_burney_journal_stylesheet.pdf)

New scholars, and authors whose work is in the "idea" stage, are welcomed to contact the editors if they would like guidance prior to submission.



The Editors of *The Burney Journal* welcome manuscripts addressing any subject relating to the lives, contemporaries, and times of the Burney family, including Frances Burney d'Arblay, Charles Burney, James Burney, Charles Burney Jr., Sarah Harriet Burney, and Edward Francesco Burney.

Submissions may vary in length from 5,000 to 7,500 words. Please use MLA format. For further information, please go to <https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/burney-society/burney-journal>.

Please send electronic submissions in Microsoft Word to [Marilyn.Francus@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Marilyn.Francus@mail.wvu.edu) and [hhavens1@utk.edu](mailto:hhavens1@utk.edu).

*The Burney Journal* is indexed by EBSCO Host.

*The Burney Journal*  
Volume 16 (2019)

Linda Zionkowski, "Putting Burney in Her Place"

Bethany Wong, "The Cloaked Actress in *Evelina* and *The Wanderer*"

Joy Hudson, "'A drudge amid the smiles of Wealth and Power': the Burneys and their Montagu Patrons"

Devon Nelson, "The Antiquarian Reception of Charles Burney's *A General History of Music*"

Volume 15 (2018)

Lorna J. Clark, "'Tis best to build no Castles in the Air': Romantic Fantasy meets Economic Reality in Frances Burney's *Court Journals*"

Geoffrey Sill, "Frances Burney and the French Revolution: Politics in Burney's *Court Journals and Letters*"

Tara Ghoshal Wallace, "Burney and Empire"

Kirsten Hall, "Tully's the Fashion: Ciceronian Fame in Frances Burney's *Cecilia*"

Cover images as posted on our Facebook page by Ashley Broome

**Editorial note: Burney Society UK members will receive the 2019 *Burney Journal* by post as soon as we receive copies from the North America Society.**

## Prof. Peter Sabor & 'Reading with Austen' Project

by Trudie Messent

Burney Society UK President, Prof. Sabor has spoken widely on the digital library project 'Reading with Austen'. Prof. Sabor is Principal Investigator of this project and his illustrated talks describe the connection between Jane Austen and the now dispersed library of Godmersham Park, the principal residence of Jane Austen's brother, Edward Austen Knight. Prof Sabor explains how the 1818 Catalogue, which lists books and their shelf location, together with other historical records, made it possible to recreate the Godmersham Park library shelves digitally. Their approach is original and effective: visitors to their online site <https://www.readingwithausten.com/> are presented with a top bar Menu. 'Library' will take you to an interactive 'mock-up' of the library shelves offering the choice of three 'Walls'. Choose one, hover over the shelves and book titles will appear. Clicking on the title of your choice will bring up images of the Godmersham library copy, if found, and comprehensive bibliographic information, which often includes an online Link to a facsimile or digital copy. Arrows allow you to navigate along the shelves, providing the opportunity to postulate, from books Jane Austen is known to have read, to which other titles may have fallen under her gaze. The main menu 'About' button accesses a wealth of fascinating information on Godmersham Park Library and the project, including the Godmersham Lost Sheep Society. 'Reading with Austen' is a wonderful digital resource and I recommend it to you unreservedly.

### Finding the Lost Sheep of Godmersham

In January 2020, Miriam Al Jamil and I were kindly invited by Jacqui Grainger, RUSI Librarian, to observe a meeting of London librarians and archivists in the stunning Library of RUSI at which Prof Sabor had been invited to speak. After outlining the 'Reading with Austen' project Prof Sabor took the opportunity to introduce the Godmersham Lost Sheep Society (GLOSS), which seeks to locate Godmersham Library volumes, seeking to acquire them, whenever possible, to return to the Knight Collection at Chawton House. Peter stressed the contribution of individuals in locating volumes in private or institutional collections. More information and ways in which individuals can help is available at [https://www.readingwithausten.com/about.html#about\\_lost-sheep](https://www.readingwithausten.com/about.html#about_lost-sheep)



*Prof Peter Sabor and Jacqui Grainger in the RUSI (Royal United Services Institute) Library*  
Photo: Trudie Messent

The international importance of this virtual library is highlighted by this research project account from Italy.

### "Reading with Austen"

by Alberta Boschi, University of Tuscia, Viterbo (Italy)

Imagine a library, with hundreds of old books arranged on white shelves in a Georgian-style home in Kent. Imagine being in that house, only a few steps away from the volumes, seeking the one you long to read. You move close to the shelves then gently skim your index finger over the spines of the books until you read *Cowper's Poems, Volume I*, your favourite collection of poems; you pick it up and open it to observe the frontispiece and read its pages, maybe sat on a comfortable chair near the fireplace.

This is exactly what I experienced the first time I visited the *Reading with Austen* website (<https://www.readingwithausten.com/about.html>), the result of a challenging project developed by Professor Peter Sabor together with the support of other professionals who succeeded in creating a global network that aims at regaining the wealth of Godmersham Park's missing books scattered worldwide.

The homepage is designed so as to recreate Godmersham Library as it was in the early nineteenth century, when Jane Austen visited her brother (<https://www.readingwithausten.com/library.html>). A message of welcome at the foot of the page tells you where you are and invites guests to go on exploring the library: then the magic starts. It is like being there, trying to fetch a book: you can move from the East Wall to the South and West ones, or even get closer as if you were kneeling down or standing on your tiptoe to reach a volume. However, the real magic is the work behind the 'scene' explained in the website's *about* section. Read it, and you'll learn that each volume is placed according to the description contained in two handwritten catalogues belonging to the Knight family, one arranged in alphabetical order, and the other by shelf location. You'll also learn that the picture displayed on the homepage was drawn by a young Canadian artist after meticulous research which included the comparison of the pictures of different coeval country houses in Kent, in order to recreate the Godmersham library as accurately as possible. However, the most interesting aspect is probably that the virtual library needs the cooperation of institutions and people worldwide to grow and retrieve all its volumes. Since a large number of books are still missing, an invitation for them to be returned to Chawton's permanent collection has been made.

This research project is evidence of the widespread love for a brilliant British author, and of course of the bright mind and excellent work of its developer and investigator. Peter Sabor succeeded in bringing new life to the library that is indeed a living 'organism' facing the 'merciless struggle for life'. I am borrowing Darwin's *Theory of Evolution* to state the greatness of this project, which actually transformed Godmersham into a living library, undergoing a process of adaptation according to the transformations of both culture and society over the course of time. The idea of homology between biological and cultural adaptation was suggested by G. R. Bortolotti and L. Hutcheon in an essay published in 2007<sup>1</sup>, a kind of defence of adaptation studies in an attempt to go beyond a quality judgement based exclusively on the faithfulness of the 'new' – or replicated – product to the original one. As far as Jane Austen is concerned, there are many examples of adaptations, both of her works and of her life: movies, TV series (the most famous and appreciated being BBC'S *Pride and Prejudice*), and games<sup>2</sup>. Godmersham virtual library can be considered as a particular kind of adaptation, as the result of the remediation<sup>3</sup> of a space – a library – and of objects – books – both telling not only their own history, but also Austen's life. In this case, the space containing modern books is reproduced in an electronic format and then made available on the web; thus, people worldwide are able to access their one-click Godmersham library. The virtual space amplifies the power of the modern book and guarantees its 'survival' in the present and coming ages, the real value being that of preserving and recreating an old medium – the book – adding the potentialities of a new one with no need to make a quality judgement in favour of one or the other. It is as if we preserved something from the past – features inherited from a common ancestor – but then, thanks to our interactions with society, new features are generated that allow us to survive and develop into new forms, to adapt and fit with the requirements of the surrounding environment. The transformation undergone by the library is analogous: we inherited modern books – preserved from the past – that are reproduced in a new electronic format (*remediation*) and then made available to everyone on the web according to the demands of contemporary society.

The *Reading with Austen* project succeeded in recreating a living library which is a celebration of Austen's life, bringing new life to the library thanks to its adaptation to the global and interactive society we live in, involving people worldwide to collaborate in order to reshape the library itself, and activating a widespread cooperation network that can help to make the difference.

<sup>1</sup>Bortolotti, Gary R., and Linda Hutcheon. "On the Origin of Adaptations: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and 'Success': Biologically." *New Literary History*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2007, pp. 443–458.

<sup>2</sup>An interesting – even though quite expensive – roleplaying game is *Good Society: a Jane Austen roleplaying game* by Storybrewers Roleplaying, released in 2018. You can learn more about the game at <https://storybrewersroleplaying.com/good-society/>. An example of an online game is the beta version of *Ever, Jane* the virtual world of Jane Austen available at <https://everjane.com/>.

<sup>3</sup>We owe Bolter and Grusin the definition of *remediation*, which is 'the way in which one medium is seen by our culture as reforming or improving upon another'. Bolter, Jay David, and Richard Grusin. *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999, p.59.

**Shelley Legacies Heritage Day** Hosted by The University of Warwick at the Shelley Theatre  
Boscombe Dorset 29 Feb 2020 - **by Helen Cooper, Burney society Member & former Committee Officer.**

I live in Poole in Dorset and in recent years I have enjoyed going to various theatrical performances at the Shelley Theatre in nearby Boscombe. This is being gradually and enthusiastically restored by volunteers in the area who have rescued it from near dereliction. It is still a work in progress of course but progress there is. I was therefore intrigued to take part in a special Shelley Legacies Heritage Day held there in February.

The theatre, built by Percy Florence Shelley in 1870 is, according to Dr David Coates of Warwick University, the largest private nineteenth century theatre still in existence. David Coates is a Teaching Fellow specialising in nineteenth century theatre history and is currently engaged in setting up a community driven project on the topic of the Shelley Legacies.

He started the Heritage Day by asking participants to recall their memories of the premises. I didn't move to Poole until 1979 so I knew very little about the place and was intrigued to hear people's memories of learning shorthand and typing or studying art there in the sixties and seventies. People recalled that various rooms were in use then but the stage itself was deemed unsafe and out of bounds - although people had stories of sneaking in to look at it. More of that later.

Dr Coates then screened a recorded interview with Dr Stephen Hebron about the Shelley papers in the Bodleian Library and connections to Boscombe. This was followed by Lord Abinger, a descendent of the Shelley family, talking about his ancestors and showing us pictures of portraits of family members.

During the lunch break participants were invited to have a go at transcribing some of the many diaries (he'd brought facsimiles with him) that still need to be transcribed and catalogued and this is one of the many areas where Dr Coates is seeking community help.

After lunch a local theatrical group, the Bournemouth Little Theatre, gave a splendid read through of one of Percy Florence's plays. This is the first time this play has been performed since it was originally staged at Boscombe Manor over 150 years ago and proved to be very funny.

### **Background and brief History of Boscombe Manor and the Shelley Theatre**

In 1849 Sir Percy Florence Shelley (1819 -1880), only surviving son of Percy Bysshe, bought a manor house set in an estate of some 195 acres at Boscombe on the cliff top just along the coast from Bournemouth (which was then in Hampshire but is now in Dorset) for his wife and his mother, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. He hoped that the combination of sea air and the pine trees would be beneficial for the latter's health. In fact she was never well enough to move there but an entry in William Allingham's diary states that she visited Sir Percy and Lady Shelley there. (Allingham was the Customs Officer at Lymington and a friend of the Shelleys.) At first just their summer residence, the estate at Boscombe became their main home in 1851.

By the middle of the nineteenth century neighbouring Bournemouth was becoming a fashionable seaside watering place. Boscombe could be reached by taking a train from London to Poole Junction in neighbouring Dorset some 5 miles away, followed by a coach to Bournemouth and continuing by omnibus from the Bath hotel to Boscombe. Sir Percy's visitors, however, would be met at Holmsley Station in the New Forest where his private carriage would take them to the manor.

Sir Percy and Lady Shelley entertained widely and they enlarged and improved the estate and the house, by then called Boscombe Manor. In 1870 they added a private theatre in the grounds and both of them performed in the plays he wrote to entertain his guests. *He Whoops to Conquer* was performed in 1856 and other original plays included *The Comedy of Terrors*. In 1867 they performed *The Lighthouse*, a melodrama by Wilkie Collins. Many famous people came to see the plays including Sir Henry Irving, Lord Tennyson and Ellen Terry. The theatre was quite substantial and included a pit for the orchestra and storage for scenery (painted by Sir Percy) in vaults beneath the stage. The scenery could be hoisted up as needed onto the stage, which was inclined, and boasted all the usual accoutrements needed for successful productions including velvet curtains, wings, flies and trap doors.

Sir Percy was a pillar of the community and gave an annual summer fete with tea and games on the lawn as a treat for local children and their teachers. The Shelleys also supported the foundation of *The Bournemouth Public Dispensary* to provide medical and surgical advice in the local area. It seems quite appropriate that today the building next to the Theatre is the local medical centre. In 1876 Sir Percy was made President of the newly formed Bournemouth Dramatic Society.

Following Mary Shelley's death in 1851 Sir Percy and Lady Shelley created a shrine to his parents in an alcove in the grounds. He commissioned a white marble sculpture by Sir Henry Weekes (1854) to be placed in St Peter's Church Bournemouth (where Mary Shelley, along with William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, Percy and Jane and the heart of Percy Bysshe Shelley are buried in the churchyard) but it was instead located in the Priory Church in Christchurch.

In the 1870s Boscombe grew rapidly from a town of 52 properties to a town of 244 residents. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century much of Boscombe Manor had been sold off for development although the Chine Gardens, Cliff Gardens and Crescent Gardens remained open spaces. Boscombe was still separated from Bournemouth by Boscombe Gardens but in 1912 steps and paths down to the sea were constructed which are still in use today.

Between 1918 and 1937 it was an exclusive girls' school and then it was bought by Bournemouth Council. With the bulk of the estate being sold off the theatre was neglected and fell in to disrepair. During the WW2 it was the headquarters of the Civil Defence for Bournemouth and used for a first aid post by St John's Ambulance Brigade. It survived the war and the air raids to become part of Bournemouth College of Technology and then Bournemouth and Poole College of Art and Design. The stage of the theatre was part of the college canteen (remembered by some of the Legacies Day participants) and the auditorium was a lecture room.

In 1979 two rooms were given over to housing the Casa Magni Shelley Collection which had been brought over from Italy. In 1984 Lord Montagu launched an appeal to start restoration and create a Centre for the Arts and by 1999 it had been given listed Grade 11 status.

The theatre is now celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the first new production was staged in October 2020 and it has come a long way since then. 10 years ago it had no heating, no windows, one toilet and one single plug socket. Today there is a separate cabaret room, the Mulberry Room, in addition to the main auditorium. The premises are now available for hire for conferences and 150 people can be accommodated in the theatre. There are still areas of bare plaster and other areas that need attention but theatregoers can enjoy a gin and tonic from a huge range of gins and tonic waters in the bar and the new toilets are very luxurious.

Source material: *Boscombe Manor* (2004) Olive J Samuel, Natula Publications

## Bench Appeal to Commemorate Frances Burney in Chawton House Garden

The Burney Society UK would like to thank all members who supported this appeal. We still welcome donations. You can participate in this appeal 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'



Lutyens- inspired Bench

Please also let us know about any contribution you make by email to [burneysocietyuk@gmail.com](mailto:burneysocietyuk@gmail.com)

## Chawton House 'ManUp' Exhibition Update

by Trudie Messent

In our last Newsletter I reported on the opening of this Exhibition. Unfortunately, Chawton House had to close only days later. Chawton House reacted quickly and very effectively by rapidly moving material from their ManUp exhibition online and adding additional material, such as a podcast with Clío O'Sullivan, the exhibition curator. I understand that this exhibition will remain online at least until Chawton House is able to reopen at <https://chawtonhouse.org/the-library/library-collections/man-up-online-exhibition/introduction/>

## Chawton House 'Lockdown Literary Festival' 15-17 May

by Miriam Al Jamil

Chawton House has staged an online festival of excellent talks, interviews, discussions and workshops over an intensive three-day weekend which has been a triumph of organisation. Many of the sessions are still available to view on YouTube.

Originally conceived as an actual festival at Chawton, it was forced to go online at short notice. It was part of the current emergency appeal for the future survival of the house, a crisis exacerbated by the coronavirus lockdown. If the key contribution of Chawton to promoting womens' literature was ever in doubt, this event resoundingly proved otherwise. The number and variety of participants as speakers and audience from all over the world demonstrated the quality of important research and creative thought which makes the study of womens' lives and writing so vibrant and exciting. The emotional and imaginative connection which the house continues to inspire was clear to see.

Papers were delivered with slides or as informal interviews and most included opportunities for questions via Twitter or Zoom to follow. The festival began with presentations about displays at Chawton on Jane Austen and responses to her novels and on the current Man-up! exhibition, as well as authors' introductions to books related to female enterprise and courage, such as Julie Wheelwright's *Sisters in Arms: Female Warriors from Antiquity to the New Millenium*, Sharon Wright's *Balloomania Belles*, and Wendy Moore's *Endell Street* about a hospital which was entirely run by women during the first world war. Related doctoral research by Rebecca James on pirates and Alison Daniell's on the formidable Elizabeth Knight, the only female squire of Chawton House, added to the sense of dynamic and fearless enterprise which characterised the women featured across all the festival talks.

Jane Austen's lesser-known contemporary women writers such as Jane West and Jane Porter were discussed by Devoney Looser, and publisher John Murray II's correspondence and collaborations with writers such as Mariana Starke and translator Sarah Austin were the subjects of Gillian Dow's talk. Of course, Jane Austen herself and her legacy were essential elements of the three-day programme. This included Emma Clery's research on the history of the Jane Austen Society and Janine Barchas's entertaining survey of the many cheap and low-budget versions of Austen's novels which were produced over the years both here and abroad. Many of these utilised Hollywood film stills for their sensationalised front covers. These prompted very personal memories and sharing of much-thumbed copies in the question and answer session. A fictionalised exploration of Austen and her sister Cassandra's relationship by Gill Hornby in her new book *Miss Austen* and personal memories of living in the house as a child by Caroline Knight, as well as Chawton House volunteer Martin Caddick's research into the house and its various residents over four hundred years set Chawton itself centre stage.

In addition to scholarly papers and readings from new work, an interesting aspect of the festival was the focus on practical creative writing in Claire Thurlow's writing workshop and Sinéad Keegan's session on writing found poetry sourced from Chawton's archive. During Keegan's sessions, participants were invited to share their own work, constructed, reassembled and edited to form new poems, and helpful advice and feedback were offered. The female accomplishment of needlework, so much part of an eighteenth-century woman's daily life, was discussed by Jennie Batchelor. Her project which inspired beautiful examples based on *The Lady's Magazine* embroidery patterns resulted in an exhibition at Chawton in 2016, and she has now published a book with Alison Larkin, *Jane Austen Embroidery*. One of her points was that the view of sewing as part of female drudgery and a symbol of oppression, from Mary Wollstonecraft onwards, needs to be reassessed. A final and delightful paper was given by Hilary Davidson who has recently published *Dress in the Age of Jane Austen*, and her slides dwelt on the fashion plates and satirical prints which often direct our views of the fashion of the early nineteenth century. Women were well aware of the niceties of detail and their implications for taste and decorum.

I have given a taste of the festival which included many more papers. There was a wealth of insights, new subjects to explore and new books to resist buying (or not!) but most of all, a real sense of joy and a shared love of the literature and history which Chawton has nurtured and enabled for many years now. Apart from missing the tea break chats which a normal conference encourages, I found Chawton's online version was at least as stimulating if not more absorbing and immersive, and I am sure it left everyone involved determined to secure the future of this centre of women's writing for many years to come.

Originally written for Women's Studies Group 1557 – 1838 <https://womensstudiesgroup.org/>

Chawton House 'Literary Festival' [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=%23chawtonlitfest](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=%23chawtonlitfest)

## **Online treats for Burney enthusiasts**

I am sure members have their favourites, but here are a few suggestions

by Miriam Al Jamil

In case you missed it, *In Our Time* on Frances Burney

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnm8C05AjhU>

### **BURNEY FAMILY MUSIC**

Pieces by Charles Burney

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eO0\\_\\_bh1YVA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eO0__bh1YVA)

## CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

*The Marriage of Figaro*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNKrxniH\\_Qo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNKrxniH_Qo)

Haydn, *Symphony No. 104*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OitPLIowJ70&t=2s>

Marin Alsop discusses Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*

[https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/blog/marin-alsop-describes-beethovens-9th-symphony?utm\\_source=wordfly&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=CultureFix18%2F04%2F20&utm\\_content=version\\_A](https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/blog/marin-alsop-describes-beethovens-9th-symphony?utm_source=wordfly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=CultureFix18%2F04%2F20&utm_content=version_A)

A clip from the film *Farinelli*. Charles Burney knew him and there are numerous references to castrato performances in London in Burney journals and letters. Here, the performer demands complete attention! Farinelli, Ombra fedele anch'io (Aria of Dario from opera 'Idaspe' by Riccardo Broschi)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3fzhMnGs5E>

## ART AND 18TH CENTURY SOCIETY

Podcast on Satire, based on a Gillray exhibition at Fairfax House, York

<https://anchor.fm/satire-no-more/episodes/2-6--Satire--Context-and-Curation-ebtldo>

Gresham College lectures are freely available. Try this on Georgian entertainment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSsQNhvx9Co>

A BBC documentary on George III

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZUzDIHarkI>

## PLACES

Try some virtual tours of houses and galleries in places where Burneys visited or stayed.

Bath <https://visitbath.co.uk/blog/virtual-tours-of-bath/>

Knole House, Kent <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/knole>

Brighton (Royal Pavilion)

<http://brightonmuseums-paviliontour.org.uk/tour/?language=english-standard-tour/>

## Burney Society Links

<http://burneysociety.uk/> website managed by Trudie Messent

<https://twitter.com/burneysocietyuk?lang=en-gb> Twitter managed by Sophie Coulombeau & Cassie Ulph

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/474331835923929/> co-administered by Trudie Messent

[burneysocietyuk@gmail.com](mailto:burneysocietyuk@gmail.com) Society gmail managed by Miriam Al Jamil & Trudie Messent

[ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com) Administrative email, including membership.

## A Plea from your Editors

We are sending out an appeal to all our members, their friends, or anyone who has anything interesting to say relevant to the Burney family, their circle of friends or their wider context.

PLEASE send articles, online links, comments etc. to us for inclusion in our Newsletters.

**Burney Family Isolation Quiz answers and additional 'Isolation' quotes too please.**

**We would be delighted to hear from you.** Please email us at [burneysocietyuk@gmail.com](mailto:burneysocietyuk@gmail.com)

Newsletter Editors: Miriam Al Jamil & Trudie Messent

**Images and acknowledgements** (Banner & Quiz) **Banner** L to R: *Charles Burney* (1726 - 1814) by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1781, NPG 3884; *James Burney* (1750 - 1821) (charcoal drawing after bust, n.d.) By R. H. Dyer (?); *Frances Burney d'Arblay* (1752 - 1840) by Edward Francisco Burney, oil on canvas, 1781, NPG 3884; *Susanna Phillips (née Burney)* (1755 - 1800) by Edward Francisco Burney NPG D13896; *Charles Burney, Jr.* (1757 - 1817) by Mary Dawson Turner (née Palgrave), after Thomas Phillips, etching, circa 1800 - 1825, NPG D14521; *Portrait of a Lady, possibly Sarah Harriet Burney* (1772 - 1844) oil on canvas, Thomas Lawrence (1769 - 1830) (circle of) Chawton House, Hampshire.

**Burney Family Isolation Quiz Images** from Top Clockwise: *Charles Burney* (1726 - 1814); *Susanna Phillips (née Burney)* (1755 - 1800); *Sarah Harriet Burney* (1772 - 1844); *James Burney* (1750 - 1821); *Frances Burney d'Arblay* (1752 - 1840). Image details and acknowledgements as above.