

# Burney Society UK Newsletter January 2024



LONDON FROM GREENWICH PARK.

*London from Greenwich Park. 1840. Engraved by T. A. Prior / Published by J & W Robins, 57 Tooley Street, London*

Dear Members,

Happy New Year. This is our first newsletter of 2024 which we hope you will enjoy reading.

Firstly, we pay tribute to two retiring members of our committee, who have given their time and effort to the Society over many years.

We then have news of Burney events in 2024. We had a panel at January's BSECS conference in Oxford, which included a paper by Beth Stewart, whose abstract received an award; there are two Burney panels at ASECS next year, organized by Prof Francesca Saggini and Lorna Clark; and Prof. Saggini will be giving a talk in King's Lynn in March.

We will be organizing a Society outing to the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane in the Spring, where we will have a special tour and then enjoy lunch at the adjacent restaurant. Details will be circulated later.

Our conference at Greenwich will take place on 13-15 June 2024.

We include reviews of the 2023 online BSECS conference, the North American Montreal conference and the Charles Burney festival in King's Lynn, as well as the Westminster Library event on Charles Burney's musical tour in which we participated with the Apollo's Cabinet ensemble, and the ALS online Christmas party.

We also have further news of Sophie Coulombeau's project.

We wish everyone a very happy new year!

Miriam and Trudie

### Dr Gillian Skinner



*Dr Gillian Skinner*

Dr Gillian Skinner is retiring from the committee, following many years of supporting and contributing to the Society. She is an outstanding scholar of Sensibility and eighteenth-century women's writing. She has recently contributed entries to the Cambridge Guide to the Eighteenth-

Century Novel and to The Routledge Anthology of Women's Theatre and Dramatic Criticism and last year her edition of Sarah Fielding's *The History of the Countess of Dellwyn* (1759) was published as part of the Chawton House Library Women's Novels Series (Routledge). For the Burney Society, She has read papers at the AGM, our Johnson House Symposium and at our conferences and organized our 2016 Durham conference in the beautiful university venue where she is Associate Professor in the Department of English Studies and Senior Research Fellow of St Chad's College. She has ably managed our bursary scheme for some years for which we are very grateful. Happily, she will remain a member of the Society, although her generous participation on the committee will be missed! We would like to extend our thanks for all her work and wish her all the best in her future projects.

Miriam Al Jamil

## Dr Cassie Ulph



Cassie is another long-term member of the Society to whom we are very grateful. Cassie took on the onerous role of Treasurer mid 2013 when her predecessor moved to Australia and made a major contribution to the Society both by developing a sound accounting system and ensuring the completeness and accuracy of the 2012/2013 accounts. Cassie went on to negotiate with the HMRC with the result that they granted the Burney Society UK HMRC charitable status in 2015.

Cassie assisted Gillian with the 2016 Durham conference in 2016 and organised our 2019 Conference 'Locating the Burneys: from the Margins to the Mainstream' Lincoln conference at Bishop Grosseteste University.

Cassie is also well known to the Burney Society of North America as she spent a period researching in the Burney Centre at McGill University and later took on the role of Editor of *The Burney Journal*.

Cassie has also published extensively, including her 2018 article 'Authoring the "Author of My Being" in Memoirs of Doctor Burney' (C. Ulph 1 Apr 2018, In *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 42.2) and 'Frances Burney's Private Professionalism' (Ulph, C. Jul 2014, In *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 38.3. p. 377 -393). More recently Cassie has been involved with the major research project on The Mary Hamilton Papers (c.1740 -c.1850), of interest to Burney members and available open access.

On behalf of the Society, I would like to thank Cassie for her many years of voluntary work for the Burney Society.

Trudie Messent

## UPCOMING BURNEY RELATED EVENTS

### Thursday 07 March 2024: Talk by Prof Francesca Saggini on 'Fanny Burney'

King's Lynn Civic Society, Great Hall, Thoresby College, Kings Lynn at 19:30 GMT

'We are very lucky that Dr. Francesca Saggini is able to visit King's Lynn and give a talk to Civic Society members. She is Professor in English Literature at the Università degli Studi della Tuscia (Viterbo), Italy, the author of *The Gothic Novel and the Stage, Romantic Appropriations* (2015, Honourable mention at the ESSE Book Awards) and *Backstage in the Novel: Frances Burney and the Theatre Arts* (2012). Francesca is currently engaged in a project called 'Frances Burney and the Muses', studying Burney's versatility in her novels and plays during her long life.' (Text provided by King's Lynn Civic Society)

Non-members are welcome. Tickets £3

All talks are in the Great Hall, Thoresby College (Shown below)



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**ASECS ANNUAL MEETING 4 -6 April 2024, Sheraton Centre, Toronto, Canada**

**BURNEY PANELS**

We are delighted to announce that thanks to the efforts of Francesca Saggini and Lorna Clark two Burney panels have been accepted this year.

**Global Burneys Panel I Chair: Francesca Saggini**

**Geoffrey Sill** (Rutgers University) “Captain James Burney in the South Pacific”

**Laura Rossi** (Università di Milano) “A Russian Cecilia? Frances Burney’s works in Russia”

**Lorna Clark** (Carleton University) “The Burneys and India”

**Global Burneys Panel II Chair: Lorna Clark**

**Linda Zionkowski** (Ohio University) “Burney and Borders”

**Barbara Witucki** (Utica University) “Excavating the Global in the Novels of Frances Burney”

**Stephen Armstrong** (Shaw University) “Le nozze di Piozzi: Music and the Italian Other in Late Eighteenth-Century London”.



Sheraton Centre, Toronto

Photo: ©Ben Brent

ASECS link: <https://asecs.org/meetings/asecs-2024-annual-meeting/>

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## Burney Society UK 2024 Conference 'Exploring Burneys', 13 – 15 June 2024

The Burney Society UK are delighted that Paula Stepankowsky, founding member and first President of the Burney Society of North America, will join us for our 2024 conference at the Old Royal Naval College campus in Historic Greenwich, to celebrate 25 years since the Burney Society was founded at a North American Jane Austen conference. We invite you to join us in recognising Paula's immense contribution to the Burney Society of North America and the Burney Society UK.



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## Call for Papers

We are inviting submissions for our 2024 Burney Society UK conference 'Exploring Burneys' to be held in Queen Anne Building, Old Royal Naval College, University of Greenwich, Historic Greenwich, London, from Thursday 13 – Saturday 15 June 2024.



Queen Anne Court, Old Royal Naval College



Bird's Eye View, Old Royal Naval College

The Old Royal Navy College dates back 600 years. It was a Tudor Palace where King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I were born; then the Royal Hospital for Seamen; the present buildings were by Sir Christopher Wren.

The conference theme 'Exploring Burneys' is deliberately designed to encompass a variety of approaches, from exploration and travel by members of the Burney family and their circle, to explorations of their lives, literature, music, art, cultural milieu, and significance. We would like to celebrate 25 years of Burney Society scholarship by looking back at groundbreaking research and contemplating new approaches to Burney studies.

Greenwich has important connections to the Burney family. Charles Burney Jr (1757-1817) ran a school in Greenwich, attended by his son, Charles Parr Burney (1785-1864) who would later take on the role of headmaster. This school was lucrative, and Charles Parr Burney lived at Croom's Hill, Greenwich. St Paul's Church, Deptford, where Charles Burney Jr was rector and is buried, is less than a mile to the east.

Although the nearest James Burney seems to have come to Greenwich is serving onboard the SS Greenwich, the Royal Museum Archive in Greenwich houses the world's largest collection of manuscripts and original documents related to maritime history, including publications by James Burney. We have already arranged a private visit to the Caird Library archive as part of the conference programme, enabling our delegates a close view of relevant resources.

You might also wish to consider:

- New ideas about family relationships and connections. What were the internal dynamics of the Burney family, and what tensions and expectations can be uncovered?
- The wider family, for example, the Richard Burneys, Charles Rousseau, Hetty's musician husband, their composer daughter, Cecilia, and the painter, Edward Francisco Burney.

- Discussion of the writing produced by the family, published or in manuscript. Experiments in writing.
- Their circle of contacts and friends – the Streatham set, Chessington Hall.
- The contribution of the Burney family towards other publications.
- Their travels to new or dangerous places, such as Frances in France, James in the Pacific.
- Dealing with absences: geography and displacement, yearning and sorrow, new challenges, and adjustments.
- Comparisons with contemporaries: travel writers, natural scientists, explorers, and collectors.
- Later generations of the Burney family

#### **PAPER PROPOSAL INFORMATION**

- ❖ Papers presented at the conference will be eligible for submission to a peer reviewed journal
- ❖ Paper proposals should be submitted to Trudie Messent, Conference Organiser. via email to [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com) with 'Proposal' in the subject line **BY 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024**. We will respond to proposals as soon as possible and no later than 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.
- ❖ Downloadable proposal forms and registration forms can be found on our website conference page. I have also attached a Word versions of the Proposal form, the Burney Society UK membership form to June 2025, and the Conference Registration form to this Newsletter email for your convenience.
- ❖ Updated information and downloadable pdf versions of the proposal submission form and a downloadable registration form can be found on <https://burneysociety.uk/conferences>

**Site map** showing location of Old Royal Naval College in relation to the National Maritime Museum and the Queen's House, the Cutty Sark, the Royal Observatory and the closest railway stations. Note the quickest route from central London is the DLR (Docklands Light Railway) from Bank to Cutty Sark DLR station, adjacent to campus. It is only a 9-minute rail journey from Bank station in central London and I would recommend this station to travel if you stay in central London. Site map link below:

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/sites/default/files/2021-08/Map-august2021-V1-lowres.jpg>

Any questions? Email Trudie Messent, Conference Organiser, via [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)



## Outline Conference schedule

### Thursday 13 June 2024 - Venue Queen Anne Court Room QA038

9:00 – 9:15 Registration & refreshments

**Keynote: Dr Sophie Coulombeau** ‘A Queer Burney? Charles Burney DD and the Earl of Findlater’.

10:00 Refreshment break

10:10 Conference panels

13:00 Lunch in QA039

13:45 – 15:15 Conference panels

15:15 Tea – Celebration tea break

15:30 - 18:00 Conference panels

Lunch & daytime refreshments included in conference fee.

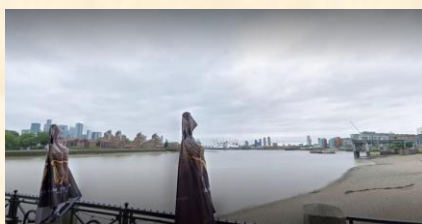
18:00 Conference Close and transfer to Trafalgar Tavern.

**18:00 – 21:00 Conference Dinner** – Venue Trafalgar Tavern, Thames Path, Greenwich. (Adjacent to Queen Anne Court). This will be a sit-down meal, but diners will have the option to order from the tavern ‘al la carte’ Nile bar group menu, giving a wide choice of options and prices, although a room hire and service charge will be added. Drinks will be available for purchase from the Hardy Suite private bar.

\*Please be advised that the **Hardy Suite is on the second floor of the Trafalgar Tavern. There is a lift to the first floor but access up to the next floor is by stairs.** I hope you will agree the view from the balcony is worth a flight of stairs! Washrooms are on the first floor.



Hardy Suite Interior, Trafalgar Tavern



River Thames from Trafalgar Tavern

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## Friday 14 June 2024 - Venue Queen Anne Court Room QA038

9:00 – 9:15 Registration and coffee

**Keynote by our President, Prof Peter Sabor**, ‘Exploring Dr Burney’s early career through newly discovered letters’.

10:00 – 10:15 Refreshment break

10:15 – 13:00 Conference panels

13:00 Leave Queen Anne Court for National Maritime Museum (across road)

Entry tickets organised in advance as part of conference.

13:05 Lunch in Parkside café of National Maritime Museum. (good outdoor space if fine weather)  
Delegates select own lunch (money provided from conference funds).

14: 00 Group divided into 2 or 3 sub-groups (depending upon numbers) Please see session circuit timings and locations below. Tickets will be provided and pre-booked for the National Maritime Museum, the Caird Archive and Queen’s House. If you wish to visit the Royal Observatory, or the Cutty Sark, you will need to book your own tickets. There is a combined ticket option online.

### Afternoon Session 1.

**14:00 – 14.45 Group A** – private group visit to Caird Archive Library (15 max)

**14:00 – 14.45 Groups B** Visit National Maritime Museum – suggested galleries include ‘Pacific Encounters’, ‘Atlantic World’ and ‘Traders’ on the first floor plus ‘The Great Map’. There are additional interesting galleries on the ground and second floors.

Link to National Maritime Museum website, with downloadable map:

[https://www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum?bcndyn=d2lkOjQ2NnxjaWQ6NTU1&gad\\_id=539813885001&utm\\_campaign=Google\\_Ads&gad\\_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCOiAhomtBhDgARIsABcaYylz34d1oW0VnmvfZHIAK9T42kY5RpcS\\_jLZFU9Dpus8ar7kobYQ-waAsjHEALw\\_wcB](https://www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum?bcndyn=d2lkOjQ2NnxjaWQ6NTU1&gad_id=539813885001&utm_campaign=Google_Ads&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCOiAhomtBhDgARIsABcaYylz34d1oW0VnmvfZHIAK9T42kY5RpcS_jLZFU9Dpus8ar7kobYQ-waAsjHEALw_wcB)

**14:00 – 14:45 Group C: Visit Queen’s House (or Royal Observatory or Cutty Sark)**



Photo: Bill Bertran The Queen’s House © CC BY-SA 2.5 DEED

### **Afternoon Session 2. 14:45 – 15:30**

**Group B** (15 max) visit to Caird Archive Library

**Groups A & C** Visit National Maritime Museum galleries/Queen's House/Cutty Sark

**15:45 – 16:45 Group C** visit to Caird Archive; Groups A & B galleries – as above.

### **Afternoon Session 3. 15:30 – 16:45**

**Group C** Visit Caird Library

**Group A & B** Visit Queen's House or visit Royal Observatory/Cutty Sark (last entry to Queen's House & Cutty Sark is 16:15, close at 17:00. Royal Observatory MAY have extended hours in the summer (to be advised).

**CAIRD LIBRARY INFORMATION** During the Caird Archive visits Miriam & I will show you resources related to conference papers & relevant to Burney studies. During the group visits you will not be able to carry out individual research, but the library staff are willing to access resources for you at another time, providing there is space available. The guide to visiting the Caird library is below. The sooner you book a research session and give them a list of resources the better, as June is normally a busy time and they have limited research desks.

PLEASE SEE CAIRD GUIDANCE SHEET [UPDATED Oct 2022 - Your First Visit Caird Archive.pdf](#)

Caird Archive information: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/caird-library/register-to-visit>

I will book tickets for the National Maritime Museum, The Caird Archive & the Queen's House.

**19:00** Delegates may choose to join us for a pub dinner at The Old Brewery

## **Saturday 15 June 2024.**

9:00 – 9:15 QA 038 Registration & refreshments

9:15 – 10:30 Burney Society UK Annual General Meeting

10:30 – 10:50 Talk by Burney Society UK 2023 Bursary Winner, Hannah Wilson, PhD candidate, University of Cambridge.

10:50 – 11:00 Refreshment break in QA039

11:00 Conference panels recommence.

13:00 Depart QA038 for Painted Hall area of Old Royal Naval College.

All morning refreshments included in conference fee.

**13:10 Lunch: at Old Royal Naval College, Old Brewery Restaurant**



Undercroft cafe, Old Royal Naval College



Old Brewery, Old Royal Naval College

**14:00 Private Group Visit to the Painted Hall, Old Royal Naval College.**



Your conference fee will include a private guided tours to explore the breathtaking **17th century Painted Hall**, often referred to as the English ‘Sistine Chapel’. Your ticket will also allow entry into the ‘Nelson Room’, where Nelson was laid in state and includes a replica of the statue in Trafalgar Square. You may also be able to visit the ‘Skittles Gallery’ (depending on opening times).

**15:30 – 14:15 Tea in Undercroft café, Painted Hall (see image previous page).**

14:15 – 15:30 Tour of Old Royal Naval College led by Miram Al Jamil – to include **the Chapel of St Peter & St Paul** which was part Sir Christopher Wren’s original design for the Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich. After a devastating fire, the Chapel was rebuilt in 1779 by James ‘Athenian’ Stuart. With its richly decorated ceiling, naval themes, and exceptional altarpiece painted by ‘the Raphael of America’, Benjamin West, the Chapel is now regarded as one of the finest neo-classical interiors in existence.



**Chapel of St Peter & St Paul, Photo by DAVID ILIFF. License: CC BY-SA 3.0**

The tour will continue with a consideration of the use of Coade stone at the Old Royal Naval College.

**15:30 – 2024 Conference closes.** Opportunity to visit Royal Observatory/Cutty Sark or Fan Museum. Delegates to arrange their own tickets.

## REVIEWS

### 13-14 June 2023: 'The Burneys: Isolation, Gatherings and Celebrations'

#### Burney Society, North America: Conference, McGill University, Montreal

Reviewed by Miriam Al Jamil

The 2023 conference at McGill took place in the intimate setting of the McLennan Rare Books Library and included a fabulous display of Burney books from the Rare Books Collection presented by curator Ann Marie Holland and introduced by Richard Virr; a delightful recital on the Clavichord by Anders Muskins; a revelation of private Burney collections by Lorna Clark, Peter Sabor and Paula Stepankowsky; a walk around Old Montreal, and many convivial gatherings around tables throughout the event.

In **Panel 1, 'Confinement and Escape'**, Beatriz Ramos and Alexandra Grenier examined Evelina and Cecilia in the light of 'apparent' freedom, the necessity for personal judgement and the tensions between a desire for privacy and the dangers of concealing one's feelings; Francesca Saggini's paper was read by Lorna Clark. This looked at Burney's play *Hubert de Vere* as a sounding board for her poetics, as having both modern and ancient significance in its setting (the Isle of Wight), and as an interrogation of the nobility of caste (aristocracy) and of soil (nobleness).

**Evelina and Cecilia reappeared In Panel 2.** In 'Frances Burney and Language', **Ryan Pepper** juxtaposed Burney's own social life as documented in her journals with the social life experienced by Evelina, and the artificiality and performative aspects of the interactions; **Hilary Havens** uncovered the many references to 'shackles' in Cecilia, and the captivity and confinement experienced by both a wife and a single woman. She used the NLTK (Natural Language Tool Kit) programme to identify positive and negative language associated with Delvile and Harrell and words emphasising ownership. Delvile's language was more positive in relation to Cecilia; **Jodi L. Wynn** discussed Frances Burney's undated MS, 'Morning Prayers', and aspects of trauma, loneliness and tension in her efforts to have it returned by Digby who threatened to publish it; **Svetlana Kochkina** discussed her findings, following her research on the various author designations in editions of Burney's publications, where 33 variations can be identified. 'Frances Burney' and 'Fanny Burney' appeared most commonly after 1900.

**Panel 3 focussed on ‘Portraying, Cultivating, and Uncovering the Burney Men’.** **Miriam Al Jamil** took a broad art historical view of Charles Burney’s appearance in James Barry’s 1777-1801 painting *The Triumph of the Thames*; **Brain McCrea** offered an unusual approach to Frances’ relationship with her son and the medicinal remedies she administered. He noted poignantly, ‘her attention made him isolated before he chose to die alone’; **Trudie Messent** shared her extensive research into the career and writing of James Burney, his observations about Omai and the fact that his contributions were often overlooked during his lifetime and still remain in the shadows; **Anders Muskens** completed the panel with a musicological paper on the Mannheim Court Orchestra and Charles Burney’s descriptions and relationship with its concert masters.

**Panel 4 on the second day of the conference was titled ‘Frances Burney, Celebrity, and Mass Market Historical Romance Novels’.** Four papers by **Hannah Korell**, **Willow White**, **Nathan Richards-Velinou** and **Teri Doerksen** offered fascinating insights into the Romance novel which is women-centric and mostly written and read by women. Frances Burney’s place as an influence on the genre is not generally acknowledged but by the end of the panel, there could be no doubt how important she was for her contemporary readers and for those more familiar with *Bridgerton*.

**A final panel, Panel 5, ‘Frances Burney and Other Writers’** highlighted **Geoffrey Sill’s** investigations into Mary Russell Mitford’s work *Christina, The Maid of the South Seas: A Poem* (1811) and the debt she owed to James Burney’s notes on the Pitcairn Islands which were far more extensive than have been realised; **Bryn Linderman** revisited *Evelina* to discuss its portrayal of violence and risks to female virtue in the context of Richardson’s *Pamela* and his instruction manuals’ cautionary tales; **Alicia Kerfoot** concentrated on the material culture and intertextuality of *Sanditon* and *Camilla*, citing the significance of blue shoes in one and lilac shoes in the other. The fabrics, colours and their origins impart a deeper, hidden story within the novels; unfortunately, **Sophie Coulombeau** was unable to attend but provided a copy of her paper on Frances Burney and Mary Hamilton.

The conference ended with Svetlana Kochkina’s book launch of her study Frances Burney’s *Evelina; The Book, Its History and its Paratext*: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-17797-2>  
So we arrived back to *Evelina* at the end of a conference marked by fascinating research and insight, as well as thoughtful questions and good humour, and proof that there will always be something new to discover about the Burneys!

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**13 -14 July 2023 ‘Sympathy, Selfhood, and an Epistemology of Emotion in Frances Burney’s *Evelina* by Beth Watson, University of Sussex**

**Reviewed by Helen Williams, Northumbria University**

A Burney Paper at the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Postgraduate and Early Career Scholars Conference, University of Edinburgh, 13-14 July 2023.

In this eloquent and often entertaining presentation, Beth Watson traced Burney’s *Evelina*’s movement from the safety of patronage of her guardian’s sentimental domesticity to the avarice and hypocrisy of the metropolis. As we know, this is a culture shock for the heroine, threatening her developing sense of self, while the novel explores the shaping of her worldview in the face of new behaviours and knowledge.

As Watson articulately demonstrated, Reverend Villars embeds his education of *Evelina* in sensibility, encouraging discourse of sentiment, sympathy and self-development in a bid to perfect the female mind. This is all nuanced by a consciousness that such a perfect woman might not exist in reality. *Evelina*, Watson showed, is a ‘symbolic vehicle of his own utopian vision’. Informed by the work of Kristen Pond, Watson revealed Burney exposing the limitations of the moral sentimentalists of this period—in particular David Hume, Francis Hutcheson and Anthony Ashley Cooper—extending this reading to additionally consider how the erroneous interpretations of specific signs have negative effects on *Evelina*’s emotional wellbeing as well as her knowledge acquisition more broadly.

This focus on systems of knowledge acquisition – of polite sociability in particular – demonstrates how *Evelina*’s particular exposure to embarrassment and awkwardness in turn affects her ability to know. A particularly rich example was Watson’s claim that *Evelina*’s blushes function as ‘physical affective interstices’ revealing the destabilisation of her internal epistemological process, a reading informed by Hume’s questioning of individual identity and Stephen Ahern’s discussion of bodily affect.

Watson is primarily concerned with *Evelina*’s development of what Watson calls her ‘self-social knowledge’, or the individual’s understanding of the self (however illusory) and her associated social behaviour. Ultimately, *Evelina* requires (as perhaps we all do) social and cultural knowledge, as well as a strong emotional foundation, for her assimilation into society. She becomes able to

read the nuances behind actions and words—a ‘trans-subjective system of heterosociability’—which involves the successful navigation of coded social cues.

Watson moved fluidly between theoretical analysis and close textual analysis of form, punctuation, and the style of the letters of Burney’s epistolary novel. She also complemented her rigorous intellectual engagement with the ideology of sensibility with slides accompanied by a ‘Beth’ avatar and sprinkled with fun imagery which, along with Watson’s characteristically comic one-liners, brought Burney’s characters and concepts to a modern audience with wit and humour, and which anecdotally inspired a few audience members to revisit Burney’s corpus for its entertainment value.

Overall, despite seeming not at first to do so, Watson’s paper neatly touched upon the conference theme of ‘Exile, Errantry, and Elsewhere’ (one of the joys of BSECS events is that the themes are merely suggested and not enforced). Her discussion of Evelina foregrounded the utopian ideal of sensibility as one which necessitates a form of exile ‘elsewhere’, as well as the faux pas of specifically sociable errantry. The conference itself was a rich source of twenty-first-century sociability—as the first in person postgraduate event since the pandemic—and the committee look forward to welcoming more Burney scholars to future events. Thank you, Beth!

Helen Williams, Northumbria University

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## **29 September – 1 October 2023: The Charles Burney Festival, King’s Lynn, Norfolk** **Reviewed by Miriam Al Jamil**

As part of a varied programme of musical events, King’s Lynn hosted a special Charles Burney Festival this Autumn, which included several concerts, a guided walk and a talk by **Trudie Messent**. These were all attended by an appreciative audience, over the weekend at the end of September. The Burney family, of course, are well known for their connection to the town and are celebrated there with pride and enthusiasm. Some of the events are reviewed below.

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**29 September. 'Charles Burney, Baroque Travel Blogger': a concert by Apollo's Cabinet, King's Lynn Town Hall**

The programme describes this as 'A Baroque musical voyage following Burney on his journey with music from each of the countries he visited, some famous, others seldom heard, interspersed with readings of his original 18th century diary entries.' Works by Austrian composer Johann Heinrich Schmelzer, Czech composer Frantisek Tůma, Italian Antonio Vivaldi, German Georg Philipp Telemann and arrangements of folk songs, opera music as well as Charles Burney's cantata, 'The despairing Shepherd' entertained the audience with a lively and varied performance. The seven members of the ensemble displayed their talented renditions of both classical and vernacular music, taking us on a tour of the European capitals which inspired Burney with their diversity of musical forms. The audience then participated in a traditional drinking 'round song' arranged by Henry Purcell, 'Tis love that makes us sad, Tis sadness makes us drink, and drinking makes us mad.' The ensemble has produced a CD which is now available, and they are performing at other venues in London. <https://www.apollocabinet.com/>

**The Burney Walk: On Saturday 30 September historian Paul Richards led a 'Burney' walk around King's Lynn.** Although the Society enjoyed a similar walk during our Cambridge conference, Richards' route covered places which were new. The town had four Freemason Lodges with a known meeting place in the Duke's Head in the market square. Richards speculated that Charles Burney may have been a member. From their house at No.84 in the High Street, the Burneys sold concert and stagecoach tickets in a prosperous area of flourishing businesses such as breweries. At Clifton House, rebuilt by the Taylor family, Burney gave harpsichord lessons to the daughter of Alice Robinson, whose second marriage was to a wealthy wine merchant. We gazed up at the windows of the music room where the lessons took place. Arthur Young admired Miss Robinson's dancing and playing, noting in his diary 'and no wonder as Mr. Burney is her tutor'.

Burney played at concerts and balls at the elegant Town Hall, rebuilt after a fire six hundred years before. In 1758 the first assembly took place in the ballroom, where Frances and her step-sister Maria Allen joined the crowd on many occasions. Frances noted in her diary the tedious old merchants chatting to the young women there. We visited the Minster and heard its complex history and Charles Burney's involvement with the purchase of a new organ. *Zadok the Priest* was performed there in 1757. Burney attended the fashionable dinner parties at the Allens' nearby and later married Elizabeth Allen, the wealthy widow, although current research suggests that complicated financial commitments meant that she did not bring as much wealth to her new

marriage as once assumed. Entries in Frances' diary paint a vivid picture of the Burney family's new life and mention her 'cabin' which gave her a view of the busy shipping in the harbour.

**Saturday 30 September, King's Lynn Corn Exchange. Trudie Messent gave a talk to a packed audience, titled 'Frances Burney: Family, Friends, and the Famous'.**

Trudie demonstrated the different fortunes of the whole Burney family, drawing on written works by several of them, including James Burney. As the centre of Burney family life moved from King's Lynn to London, their lives became more complex, and their circle widened to include important eighteenth-century political and cultural figures.

Three further concerts over the weekend, titled '**Burney and the Bachs**', '**Burney and Beyond**' and '**Tea with Dr. Burney**' completed the Charles Burney Festival with musical panache, ensuring that all participants and audiences were left with ample evidence of Dr. Burney's talent and important contributions to musicology and musical performance. We will let Society members know about future King's Lynn events and hope to continue our connections with such an important place in Burney family history.

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**29 – 30 Sept. 2023: Charles Burney Festival, King's Lynn, 'Reflections of a Participant'**

**by Trudie Messent**

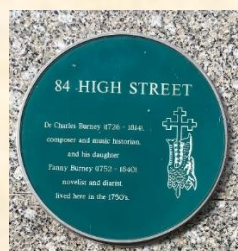
My thanks to Miriam for putting my name forward to the Festival Artistic Director, Ambrose Miller, to give the Charles Burney Festival talk. I accepted with alacrity, it was only later that I recalled that, whilst prior to retirement, one-hour lectures were routine, for the last decade I had been more used to giving twenty -minute conference papers. It also occurred to me that the audience would be extremely well informed, and I was at a distinct disadvantage, never having visited King's Lynn previously, nor did I know much about the time the Burney's spent in King's Lynn, as my prior research had focussed on Frances Burney's years at Court and to a lesser extent, James Burney. It was clearly time for some intensive research!



Above: Advertisement for Esther Sleepes Burney's fan business, spotted during my research. Source:

<https://gw.geneanet.org/tinagaquer>

On Saturday morning I joined Miriam on the **Burney Walk**, led by Paul Richards. I found this walk highly informative and it had several highlights for me.



84 High Street, now a Clarks shoe shop, was once the site of a Burney family home. Another former home in Chapel Street has also been demolished.

I was thrilled to realise that three generations of the Burney-Cumming family were present, photographed here in front of the King's Lynn Frances Burney bench, opposite the historic Assembly Rooms visited by Frances on her visits Maria in King's Lynn.



The present owners of this beautiful home allowed us into the garden to view the tower where Charles Burney taught music to their daughter. The Tower also had the advantage of allowing the occupants to view transport on the river from the comfort of their home.

A special treat was the garden where Frances Burney wrote one of my favourite journal entries: *'We have just had a wedding – a publick wedding – [...]The Walk that leads up to the Church was Crowded almost incredibly a prodigious mob indeed! – I'm sure I trembled for the Bride. O what a Gauntlet for for any woman of delicacy to run! –(Frances Burney, The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney,*



*Vol I 1768 – 1773, Edit. Troide, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988) pp.16 -17. Wednesday, July [20] 10 in the morning.*

After the Burney Walk Miriam and I went to look at the river facing section of the Church yard garden and estimate the probable former location of the Burney 'cabin', where Frances retreated to write. The owners of the public house confirmed that they backed onto the Churchyard so felt we were gazing out on her 'cabin view'.



We had been invited to lunch by Alison Gifford, on behalf of the Guella Trust, who had sponsored the talk. I would like to formally extend my thanks to Alison and the Guella Trust for their support. I cannot say too much, but I can assure our members that the Guella Trust have impressive plans to foster the legacy of the Burney family, and other King's Lynn residents of note, into the future. The Corn Exchange was across the Square. The cinema, the venue for my talk, was rather a surprise. It was very wide and the lectern had been placed on the floor at one corner, minus the microphone which I had been promised, and was very necessary. I eventually worked out how to balance my notes precariously on the narrow ledge edge in front screen. The talk was a sell-out, indicating the strength of local interest in the Burney family from this very well-informed audience. My thanks to all involved and I look forward to attending the next Charles Burney Festival.



The Corn Exchange exterior, dating from 1854

Photos above: Trudie Messent



The Cinema Talk Venue – fortunately Alison eventually

persuaded them to dim the blue lighting! Photo: M Al Jamil

## 9 December 2023: Apollo's Cabinet: Charles Burney's European Travels

Westminster Music Library

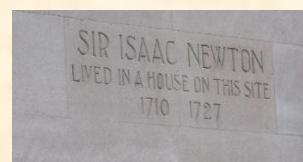
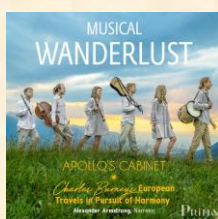
Review by Miriam Al Jamil

It was good to hear once again the musical and vocal skills of the talented ensemble, Apollo's Cabinet, in Westminster Music Library, on the site of what was once the home of the Burney family.

This was part of their CD launch tour which had featured in the King's Lynn Festival. However, this time the event was arranged as a panel discussion about Charles Burney's tour of Europe, interspersed with music to represent the countries he visited and with his own composition 'The Despairing Shepherd' as a finale. Miriam Al Jamil, Sophie Coulombeau and Karin Fernald took part in the panel to add anecdotes and facts about Burney's life and his journeys in the context of Grand Tour practices, the people he met in different European towns and to discuss his motives and plans for writing a History of Music. We also gave an idea of the many talented Burney family, including of course the book-stealing Charles junior and, as Karin rightly pointed out, the performance abilities of Hetty who is often overlooked. We could certainly have continued much longer! It was a delightful morning and we hope to meet the ensemble again and wish them every much-deserved success. I am sure Charles Burney would have enjoyed playing with them.



Above Apollo's Cabinet (Photo: S Coulombeau); Below L > R CD Cover, Burney plaque, Newton plaque (Photos: M Al Jamil)



Alliance of Literary Societies 50th Anniversary 'Christmas Cracker' Zoom

**15th December 2023 8.30 (New Zealand)**

**Reviewed by Cathie Harrop**

On the 15th December at 8.30 in the morning, New Zealand time, I joined the ALS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Christmas Cracker party. A few days earlier I had accepted the invitation as a member of the Burney Society UK to join the ALS Christmas Zoom meeting.

We were invited to get together to celebrate the season and raise a glass of festive cheer together and to bring along “your negus or beer; Cold Roast or Cold Boiled if you wish” and also we were invited to consider which character from fiction we would most like to invite to our Christmas lunch and be prepared to tell everyone why.

Unfortunately, my Zoom connection took a few minutes to sort itself out, so I missed the beginning of this delightful meeting. I was there with my toast and coffee, the rest of the world appeared to raise various glasses to suit their time of the evening.

I was not always able to catch the names of Societies represented but the range of wished for lunch companions was very varied and the reasons were very entertaining. Perhaps my favourite guest suggested was Mr Micawber from David Copperfield and one reason given was that he never went anywhere without Mrs Micawber so they would be easier to have two guests.

Another speaker, and again I missed the name of this lady, was talking about her forthcoming visit to NZ to follow the footsteps of Mary Taylor who corresponded with Charlotte Bronte for many years. I would like to have had the opportunity to welcome this speaker here if she is visiting my part of New Zealand but again I was too slow to catch her name or society.

I don't know if this is an annual Christmas party or just for this 50th of ALS but, if there is one next year, I do encourage all Burney members to consider joining in on zoom for a very entertaining time.

Thank you to The Alliance of Literary Societies and my best wishes to all for a very Happy New Year.

Cathie Harrop New Zealand. Dec 2023

## Burney News

**Lorna Clark**, Editor of *The Burney Letter* has informed us of this resource development:

“With the generous help of Peter Sabor and his research coordinator (Nathan Richards-Velinou), the *Burney Letters* will soon be made available on the McGill website (at the moment, there is a list of the contents for each issue).” Lorna Clark, Carleton University, Canada.

**Prof Peter Sabor** wrote this report:

### “The Letters of Dr Charles Burney 1751-1814

The Letters of Dr Charles Burney 1751-1814, a six-volume collected edition of Dr Burney’s letters published by Oxford University Press, is now nearing completion. Volume 1, covering the period 1751 through 1784, edited by Alvaro Ribeiro, SJ, appeared long ago: in 1991. After a lengthy delay, and after Dr Ribeiro’s death in 2013, the edition resumed under my general editorship. Volume 3, covering the period 1794 through 1799, edited by Stewart Cooke, was published by OUP this year: weighing in at 600 pages, it contains numerous hitherto unpublished letters. Volume 4, covering 1800 through 1806, also edited by Stewart, is now in press and will appear in 2024, together with volume 2, covering 1785 through 1793, edited by Lorna Clark. Volume 5, edited by Nancy Johnson, covers 1807 to 1809; volume 6, which I am editing myself, covers 1810 to 1814. These two volumes are scheduled for publication in 2026, the tercentenary of Dr Burney’s birth. The final volume also includes ancillary material, such as transcripts of Dr Burney’s will and of the Gentleman’s Magazine obituary, and letters that have come to light after the publication of the relevant volumes in the edition.

**Peter Sabor, McGill University**

## Burney Society UK Committee News

**Dr Sophie Coulombeau**, (University of York) has recently taken on two important roles for the Burney Society. Sophie will be working as an editor on *The Burney Journal*, following the resignation of Cassie Ulph. Sophie has also kindly agreed to take on responsibility for the Burney Society UK Research Bursary following the resignation of Gillian Skinner. It is impressive that Sophie has agreed to these extra responsibilities, in addition to her exciting new role, of which Sophie writes:

“Sophie Coulombeau has received a grant from the York Impact Accelerator Fund for a project entitled ‘#METOO In The Georgian Court’. She has recently published research addressing the

sexual harassment of the courtier Mary Hamilton (1756-1816) by the Prince of Wales (later George IV) over the course of the year 1779. This grant will support conversations and initiatives with secondary schools, curators and charities to explore ways in which the research might change public understanding of workplace harassment.”

Mary Hamilton was a contemporary, friend and rival of Frances Burney’s who also knew Dr Burney well. Her time at court preceded Frances’s by several years, but the two had many court acquaintances in common, and there are some interesting parallels between their experiences.”

**Beth Stewart (née) Watson**, has been nominated for the BSECS 2024 Annual Conference President’s Prize for her January 2024 Paper, ‘A Theatre of Perceptions’: Frances Burney’s Utilisation of the Humean Self in *Evelina* and *Camilla*’, presented as part of the Burney Society UK panel on Work and Play. Beth had already won a postgraduate conference award for her abstract for this paper, formally presented to her at the Conference Dinner. This follows on from her success at the 2023 BSECS Annual Conference where Beth was also nominated for the BSEC President’s Prize and at the July 2023 BSECS Postgraduate Conference in Edinburgh, where Beth was nominated for ‘Best Paper’. (There is a review of this paper above, in the Reviews section)

### **Membership renewals 2023 – 2024**

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2024, you will find the current membership renewal form attached to this email. Subscriptions paid now will be valid until June 2025. We would be very pleased to welcome all who choose to renew and would request that any who do not, let us know if they wish to remain on our mailing list.

### **Burney Society UK Social media sites**

- our website <https://burneysociety.uk> managed by Trudie Messent
- our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/474331835923929> currently managed by Trudie Messent
- our Twitter account <https://twitter.com/burneysocietyuk?lang=en> currently managed by Sophie Coulombeau and Beth Stewart

We would be pleased to hear from members if you have any comment or newsletter items, please send them to us at [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)