

BURNEY SOCIETY UK SUMMER 2025 NEWSLETTER



Apollo and the Muses: Apollo dances with the nine muses; after Raphael Etching. © The Trustees of the British Museum

Dear Burney members,

We are happy to send you our Summer 2025 Newsletter full of information about events and publications, reviews and research.

We include a schedule for our Symposium in Southampton on 9th July, where we will hold our AGM and the new *Burney Journal* will be available for members. We will then enjoy papers on the Burney family and their circle, as well as a dramatic reading from one of Burney's plays – we are keeping the name of the play a secret! Could the above picture give a clue I wonder? A prize for anyone who can spot the play before Peter!

You will also find news of imminent publication dates for editions of Burney letters and novels; a talk which you will be able to access online; and reviews of the Burney panel at BSECS in January and the Burney visit to the Heinz Archive at the NPG. There is also news of a watercolour portrait of Charles Burney Jnr. and a debate about its provenance.

We are always happy to hear from our members and thank you for your continuing support. We wish you a bright and sunny summer!

Miriam Al Jamil & Trudie Messent, Co-Editors

Burney Society UK One-Day In-Person Symposium 9 July 2025

We are delighted to announce that we now have the schedule for this symposium and registration is open. Please see the attached registration form. We do hope as many of you as possible are able to join us. It is a great venue, just a few minutes from Southampton Main Railway station. The venue is the Ovation Studio, Mayflower Theatre, 22-26 Commercial Road, Southampton SO15 1GE.

Practical information for 9th July 2025

Travel by train - Southampton Central station is a few minutes' walk from the Mayflower Theatre.



Trains – London, Waterloo to Southampton Central

There are **direct trains** from London, Waterloo to Southampton Central, but some involve changes so beware. A direct train is scheduled to leave Waterloo at 08:05, arriving at Southampton Central in 1 hr 17 mins, at 09:22. The next train leaves Waterloo at 08:35, arriving at Southampton Central in 1 hr 14 minutes at 09:49, so a brisk walk should arrive by registration. Please check timings the day before you travel as timetables are due to be updated soon.

To return to London, Waterloo, direct trains depart Southampton Central at 18:30, 19:00, 19:30, 20:00, 20:30, 21:00 and 21:30 etc., all with travel times of 1 hr 16 mins – 1hr 29 mins.

Trains – Oxford to Southampton Central

There are also **direct trains** from Oxford to Southampton Central. A direct train is scheduled to leave Oxford at 08:16, takes 1 hr 27 minutes, arriving at Southampton Central at 09:37, so a brisk walk should reach Mayflower Theatre by 10:00.

To return to Oxford, direct trains depart Southampton Central at 18:15, 19:15, 20:15, 21:15. The travel time is 1 hour and 23 minutes.

Other stations with direct trains to Southampton Central include Basingstoke, Bournemouth, Brighton, Cardiff, Poole, Portsmouth Harbour, Portsmouth & Southsea, Weymouth, Winchester.

By car: there are car- parks near to the Mayflower Theatre.

Burney Society Symposium, 9 July, Mayflower Theatre, Southampton.

Schedule

09:30 – 09:50 Registration and morning refreshments

09:50 – 10:50 Annual General Meeting

10:50 – 11:15 Feedback from 2024 Bursary award winners, Elizabeth Stewart & Madeline Maya

11:15 – 12:35 Panel 1 The French Connection

11:15 – 11:45 Miriam Al Jamil, 'Picturing Alexandre d'Arblay'.

11:45 – 12:15 Ariella Kharasch, 'Frances Burney's Little Tract'.

12:15 – 12:35 Panel Q & A

12:35 – 13:35 Lunch

13:35 – 14:05 Karin Fernald, 'Frances Burney, Hester Thrale and the City of Bath'.

14:05 – 14:15 Q & A

14:15 – 15:35 Panel 2. The Dilemmas of Marriage

14:15 – 14:45 Trudie Messent, 'Marrying into the Burneys.'

14:45 – 15:15 Dr Jeanette Holt 'Samual Johnson and the Dilemma of Unequal Marriage'.

15:15 – 15:35 Panel Q & A

15:35 – 15:50 Refreshments – ice-creams available!

15:50 – 17:10 Panel 3 *Evelina*

15:50 – 16:20 Prof. Yoko Kubo, 'Pleasure Gardens and Public Femininity: Urban Leisure in Frances Burney's *Evelina* and Her Times'.

16:20 – 16:50 Peter Sabor, FRSC, 'From Emily to Evelina: Frances Burney at Work'.

16:50 – 17:10 Panel Q & A

17:10 – 17:50 Read-through of a 'mystery' Frances Burney play excerpt.

17:50 – 18:00 Symposium close

18: 00 Depart for Dinner at Papillon Restaurant, across the road from the Mayflower Theatre. Please let us know if you would like us to book you a place. You can order from the menu on the day and pay the restaurant. Their menu is available via this link - <https://papillon-southampton.co.uk>

Burney Publication News

The Burney Journal Volume 20

We are delighted that the latest volume of the Burney Journal, edited by Sophie Coulombeau, will be available for members to collect on the 9 July at our Southampton Symposium. Volume 20 includes articles by our Chair, Miriam Al Jamil and one of our 2024 Burney Society UK Bursary winners, Madeline Maya.

Burney related Publications

Sophie Coulombeau (2024) *Reading with the Burneys: Patronage, Paratext, and Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Elements in Eighteenth-Century Connections)

In this excellent monograph Coulombeau draws upon a decade of her research into Charles Burney to detail his complex responses to *Evelina*, the first published novel of his older sister Frances Burney. In this detailed study Coulombeau utilises an approach she refers to as ‘3D reading’ to construct a multidimensional understanding of Charles Burney’s relationship to his sister’s text, as prefixer, reader and loaner. This is a text every Burney enthusiast will wish to read for themselves, and I urge you to do so. Well worth purchasing, this text is also freely available as a downloadable pdf, via https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/D36EC9AF4BC06A4E07942BB56FA45EFD/9781009532945AR.pdf/Reading_with_the_Burneys.pdf?event-type=FTLA

by Trudie Messent (A fuller review is in preparation for the BSECS Journal, JSECS).

Upcoming Burney publications

Burney academics have provided us with the following information:

For research news—the sixth and final volume of *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney* (OUP), which I edited, is scheduled for publication in January 2026—which of course is his tercentenary year. Volumes three and four, both edited by Stewart Cooke, are now available, and volume two, edited by Lorna Clarke, is imminent. Volume five, edited by Nancy Johnson, will complete the set: with publication in late 2026 (I hope) or 2027.

As for *The Cambridge Edition of the Novels of Frances Burney, Evelina*, which I'm editing, and *Cecilia*, edited by Hilary Havens, are now in the final stages—with submission to CUP planned for later this year and publication in 2026. *Camilla*, edited by George Justice, and *The Wanderer*, edited by Lorna Clark, are both in progress. **Prof Peter Sabor**, 19 April 2025

Vol. 2 of *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney* will be out soon, and my next project is an edition of *The Wanderer* in the Cambridge University Press series of which Peter Sabor is general editor!

Dr Lorna Clark, 19 April 2025

Beth Stewart (2025): The process of writing and self-publishing, *Macbeth: The Soliloquies*.

Beth has recently co-written and self-published a study guide on the soliloquies in *Macbeth*, and kindly agreed to write an account of the process:

It can be a tricky thing, to write a study guide to a piece of literature. Literature is something to be *felt*, to be *experienced*, and no matter how much context I provide, or how many metaphors, similes, and adjectives I point out, I can't *experience* a text for my students. So the question is, how can I facilitate an understanding of something so nuanced, complex, and archaic as Shakespeare, to enable that connection to take place? This is something often lost, I think, within the assessments of the current English Literature curriculum; we spend too much time focusing on feature-spotting, and memorising, that we struggle to encourage the personal engagement of the texts essential for thorough comprehension and appreciation. In this way, it can sometimes be harder to write guides and create educational and pedagogically sound content for young people, than to write for an adult audience already invested in your topic. Nevertheless, it remains important that we try.

At the beginning of this year, I began, alongside my co-author Alys Smith, to work on my first educational publication: *Macbeth: The Soliloquies*. The text would serve as a guide for GCSE and A-Level students preparing for summer examinations on *Macbeth*, and would provide key historical context, terminology glossaries and in-depth close analysis. To help with student understanding, it became clear that I would need to translate the original soliloquies into modern English and identify brief, yet poignant moments of historical or religious reference that would be clear to a Jacobean audience, less so to a contemporary teenager.

The wonderful thing about Shakespeare is that, no matter how often you read his plays or study his work on an academic level, there is always something new to discover or experience when you return. Shakespeare has accompanied me on every step I have taken through my academic journey; during my undergraduate, I worked through Shakespeare yearly, from Introduction to Drama to Shakespeare on

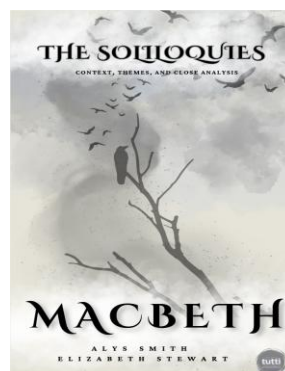
Film. After a nearly four-hour exam on his plays - where my breaks and extra time became more a curse than a blessing - I vowed to buck the bard forevermore. You can imagine my irritation when, during the first term of my MLitt on *Women, Writing, and Gender*, I found him front and centre for our first seminar, on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Yet, it seems impossible to stay mad at Shakespeare; after all, it wasn't his fault he was a genius. It's impossible because whenever we do return to him, we always find something new to say, to experience, to ponder. I found this when working on my modern translations of the soliloquies. I became consumed by ideas of tone, delivery, emphasis, and how they would transform the words on the page. I considered the text from the lens of a director: would I have the dagger on the stage, in front of Macbeth, solidifying his parasitic ambition as something supernatural? Or, would I leave only Macbeth's shadow in the moonlight, an empty, hanging air, being filled with the ravings of a man losing himself to an imperial greed?

Slowly, Alys and I constructed a series of annotations designed to prompt these questions in our young readers, and to help them see the interpretive potentialities hidden within Shakespeare. Alys runs her own business, Tutti Tutoring, and we decided to publish through her website. While we don't have a traditional publisher, and therefore cannot produce physical copies of the text just yet, we were able to self-publish our work, which has been incredibly freeing. We were able to work on our own schedule, to ensure the product was as detailed as it could be, and we had full creative control over the design, for which we used Canva. We then published on the Tutti Tutoring website, but also TES, where teachers can purchase a school licence and use our resources within English Departments across the UK. We are also now looking into self-publication on Amazon, as we hope *Macbeth: The Soliloquies* will be the first in a series of study guides! While the lack of physical publication does mean we are currently unable to distribute the guides in stores, it's something we certainly aspire to do in the future, and there are so many wonderful opportunities available online to get your work out there.

At Tutti Tutoring, Alys and I dedicate ourselves to a pedagogic approach that encourages inquisitive commentary and collaboration, with other students of course, but also with the authors themselves. Genius is, and has always been, collaborative. We want our students to appreciate Shakespeare's genius because the genius of Shakespeare *comes* from the genius of you.

As exams roll around, we can only wish this upcoming set of scholars the best of luck and hope they take with them more than their grade, but a love of literature which we cannot afford to lose, and an appreciation of themselves, and everything they bring to the texts they read. By Beth Stewart.



Purchase: <https://www.tuttitutoring.com/tutti-resources/p/macbeth-soliloquies-a-complete-guide>

I am sure members will be pleased to hear that our most recent UK committee member, Beth Stewart (née) Watson, has recently been appointed PGR Editor of the *Romance, Revolution and Reform Journal* of the Southampton Centre for Nineteenth- Century Research.

2025 Event Reports

BSECS January 2025 Bodies and Embodiment - Burney Society UK panel report

Once again the Burney Society UK was happy to participate in the annual BSECS conference, which this year convened for the first time at Pembroke College, Oxford. Panels were restricted to 15 minutes for each paper due to the increase in panels on offer this year. It was a challenge to our three speakers but they managed to produce excellent papers which were very much appropriate for the overall conference theme, and also had many interesting connections between them. Miriam Al Jamil chaired the event.

Lucy-Anne Katgely 'Beauty and Bias: Gendered Embodiment and Social Deformity in Sarah Harriet Burney's novels'.

This paper explored how Sarah Harriet interrogated physical form as a reflection of societal values in her work. She engaged with the perceived ideals of feminine beauty, such as symmetry, regularity and harmony, in many of her characters to challenge binaries of conformity and nonconformity, ableness and disability. In so doing, she made physical appearance secondary to their inner qualities and emotional states. Both Sarah Harriet and Frances Burney used non-normative physicality in characters such as Eugenia in *Camilla* (1796), and Barbara in *Traits of Nature* (1812) to discuss female intellectual achievement and the double standards by which men and women were judged.

Trudie Messent "'Melancholy was the existence, where Happiness was excluded": Frances Burney's ill-health and melancholy at the court of George III and use of the term "melancholy" in her novels'.

Using many quotations from Frances Burney's journals, this paper examined how Burney's comments on life at Court reflected symptoms traditionally described as Melancholia. Although Burney rarely directly linked her ill health to melancholy, she clearly saw connections.

The paper then examined how the term appeared in the novels and suggested that its frequency links to Burney's experience of Court life; in *Evelina* it is mainly used as an adjective to describe, for example, the circumstances, meditation, the eyes; it is notable that 'melancholy' appears the most in *Camilla*, the novel published after Burney left Court, where it is most often associated with 'air', i.e. 'a melancholy air'. References to the term dramatically reduce in her last and much later novel, *The Wanderer*.

Elizabeth Stewart 'Literary Aesthetics as Philosophical Intervention within the works of Frances Burney'

This paper began with a discussion of Maria Cosway's 1782 painting, Portrait of Georgiana as Cynthia from Spenser's 'Faerie Queene', (Chatsworth House Trust: <https://www.chatsworth.org/news-media/news-blogs-press-releases/cosways-georgiana/>).

The female body as a site of mutability and metamorphosis, as seen within the Ovidian framework of shifting female passions and bodily transformations, is presented by Cosway as having broken its earthly bonds into a new divine and aesthetic form. Frances Burney drew on this framework and on contemporary philosophy to transform her characters Eugenia (*Camilla*), Juliet (*The Wanderer*) and Madame Duval (*Evelina*). Burney used a technique of 'hypersensibility'. This describes a moment of disabling 'transformative breakdown' as a consequence of dealing with extreme and unfamiliar emotion which fundamentally alters the psychology of the character.

Questions from the audience enabled further discussion on the subject of the body in Burney's life and work. For example, could reading passages of 'hypersensibility' aloud create the sensations of hyperventilation? The influence of music, the importance of breathing and rhythm could have been important. There were also questions on examples of hysteria at Court, on the implications of the word 'sanguine', and on the notion of asymmetry as an artistic tradition which impacted developing views of female physical perfection as expressed in the work of female authors.

7 April 2025: Burney Society UK Summer visit to National Portrait Gallery, Heinz Archive.

We are very indebted to Paul Cox, Curator of the National Portrait Gallery, Heinz Archive, for his kindness in permitting a group of twelve Burney enthusiasts to spend the afternoon in the Archive, and for the time he spent in preparation for our visit, locating and displaying a fascinating array of Burney related artefacts, a few of which can be seen below. Trudie.



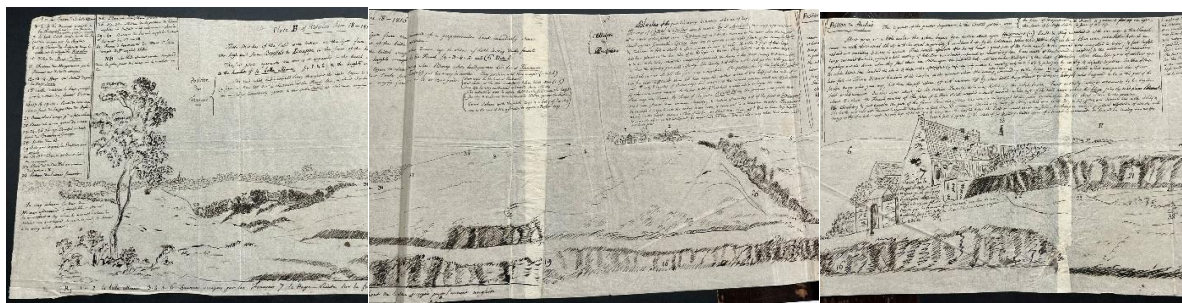


Susan Burney by Edward Francisco Burney ©NPG

Photograph: T Messent



Charles Turner (sculpt) *Madame d'Arblay* after a portrait by Edward Francisco Burney currently at Parham House. ©NPG Photograph: T Messent



Charles d'Arblay Panorama: *Waterloo June 18, 1815*. Pen and ink on paper (unfurled) ©NPG

Photographs: T Messent

10 April 2025: Francesca Saggini Online Talk: Jane Austen and the Golden Age of Crime Fiction (WSG Online Seminar)



Prof Francesca Saggini gave a stimulating online lecture as part of the Women's Studies Group Seminar series in which Saggini drew parallels between the writing of Jane Austen and Agatha Christie, including a comparison of Jane Austen's 'Highbury' and Agatha Christie's @St. Mary Mead. By Trudie Messent

29 May: PUBLIC TALK Sophie Coulombeau - Brothers & Lovers: Frances Burney and the Gothic



This talk which Sophie gave at the University of Aberdeen on the 29 May 2025, was in connection with their **Fear and Fascination** Exhibition, which continues until 7 December, if any members would like to visit.

The information Aberdeen University provided prior to Sophie's talk was:

The University is delighted to welcome author and radio presenter Sophie Coulombeau in this talk showcasing some of the research from her recent publication 'Reading with the Burneys' which is closely linked to Aberdeen.

In this talk, Sophie Coulombeau will showcase some of the research she published recently in her book *Reading With The Burneys* (Cambridge University Press 2024). This publication centres on an all-important annotated set of Fanny Burney's first novel *Evelina*, which is held in the University of Aberdeen's Special Collections.

We are hoping to record this talk. **If you are unable to attend the event in person but would like to receive a link to the recording that will be prepared after the event, please**

email uoacollections@abdn.ac.uk

Edward Francisco Burney watercolour

We were recently contacted by a gallery in Wales, seeking information about this watercolour, which they believed to be of Charles Parr Burney. Given the similarity to the print of Charles Burney, DD, FRS which we viewed on our 7 April visit to the NPG Heinz Archive, the watercolour may be of Charles Burney Jr., rather than his son Charles Parr Burney. I have advised the gallery that this is likely to be the case. For further information please see the link below.

<https://www.radnorshire-fine-arts.co.uk/product/edward-francis-burney-portrait-of-charles-parr-burney-d-d-painted-c-1821/>



Watercolour, possibly by Edward Francisco Burney
Reproduced with permission of the current owner



Charles Burney, D.D. F.R.S. & S.A. Print
© NPG Photo: T Messent

Membership renewals 2025 – 2026

Many thanks to all of you who have already renewed your membership. As a small literary society we rely on your membership fees for our continuance. If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2026 you will find the current membership renewal form attached to this email. Subscriptions paid now will be valid until June 2026. 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 be taken off 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>

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

Miriam Al Jamil & Trudie Messent, Newsletter co-editors