

Burney Letter

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The Susan Burney Letters project

By Philip Olleson



Susan Burney by her cousin Edward Francesco Burney, from R. Brimley Johnson, *Fanny Burney and the Burneys* (1926).

Susanna Elizabeth Burney, known as Susan to her family, was born in 1755, the third of Charles Burney's daughters, and two-and-a-half years younger than her sister Frances. She grew up in London, where she was able to observe at close quarters the musical life of the capital and to meet the many musicians, men of letters, and artists who visited the family home. She was the most musically knowledgeable of the Burney children and was exceptionally close to her father. She was also close to Frances, the singer Pacchierotti commenting to them that "there [is] but one soul – but one mind between you – you are two in one."

In January 1782, she married Captain Molesworth Phillips (1755-1832), a Royal Marines officer and a close friend of her elder brother James. Both men had been with Captain Cook on his last expedition, when Phillips had reportedly behaved with consummate bravery in the incident in Hawaii in February 1779 in which Cook met his death at the hands of a band of hostile islanders. When he returned home in October 1780 it was as a hero, and it was not long before James brought him to the family home and introduced him to the twenty-five-year-old Susan. She was immediately swept off her feet, and she and Phillips became engaged in January or February of the following year.

In the spring of 1784 they settled at Mickleham, near Dorking, where they soon became firm friends with their neighbors William and Francesca

Please see Susan Burney, on p. 5

“Frances Burney and Her Contemporaries” in Los Angeles

By Paula Stepankowsky

Talks on topics ranging from “Burney’s Anger” to Burney’s reviewers, a display of Burney first editions, the presentation of the first-ever Hemlow Prize and a reading of selections from a Burney comedy will highlight the 11th annual general meeting of The Burney Society in North America on Thursday, Oct. 7, 2004.

The conference will be held at two venues in downtown Los Angeles: the beautifully restored Art Deco/Art Nouveau Los Angeles Public Library and the elegant Millennium Biltmore Hotel,

both within a block of one another.

The conference will be divided into two sections. The first will feature more than 10 speakers talking on a variety of topics related to the theme at the Los Angeles Public Library beginning with registration at 9 a.m. and concluding at 5:15 p.m. Early-bird parking is available at \$11.50 for the entire day for those who park in a nearby garage before 9 a.m. The main branch of the Los Angeles Public Library is located at 630 S.W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90071. The library’s Web page is www.lapl.org.

The meeting will be held in the

Board Room of the library. Since the library doesn't officially open until 10 a.m., conference attendees must enter the library through the Flower Street entrance for the 9 a.m. registration. Once inside, walk about 100 yards straight through the library until you come to an eight-story atrium. On the left, you will see an elevator, which you will take to the fourth floor. The lobby to the board room is at the elevator entrance.

Please see L.A. on p. 2

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L.A.

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Following the day of talks, the conference will reconvene at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel, 506 South Grand Avenue, for the annual dinner. Registration for the dinner will start at 6:30 p.m.

The winner of the first Hemlow Prize will be announced during the dinner. The prize, for the best graduate student essay in Burney studies, is given in honour of the memory of Dr. Joyce Hemlow, the founding editor of the Burney Project, which is housed in the Burney Centre at McGill University in Montreal.

Participants may attend both the day of talks and the dinner together for one price, or just the dinner, which will include a short business meeting, the presentation of the Hemlow Prize and readings from a Burney comedy organized by Dr. Juliet McMaster. Anyone who was in Boston in 2000 to hear Juliet's organized reading from *The Willings* won't want to miss this!

Here is a list of speakers scheduled to present at the Los Angeles Public Library:

- Elaine Bander, Dawson College, Montreal, "Austen, Burney, and 'Bad Morality'"
- Melissa Sodeman, UCLA, "A Character Unfathomable': Frances Burney's *The Wanderer*"
- Heather Ladd, "Frances Burney, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and The Child of Nature"
- Kadesh Minter, University of Florida, "Frances Burney and Her Eighteenth-Century Reviewers"
- Emily Hodgson Anderson, Yale University, "Stage Expression in Frances Burney's *The Wanderer*: How a Playwright Writes Novels"
- Gefen Bar-On, McGill University, "Tears and Comic Farce: Burney's

Enactment of Shakespearean Tragedy"

- Noelle Chao, UCLA, "A Fiction of Musical Letters: Burney's *Cecilia* and the Problems of Textual Sonority"
- Brian McCrea, University of Florida, "Frances Burney's Anger"
- Alexander H. Pitofsky, Appalachian State University, "A Black's But a Black': Race, Manners, and Satire in Burney's *A Busy Day*"
- Scarlet Bowen, University of Colorado at Boulder, "*The Wanderer* and Popular Radicalism"

The last presentation at the library will be a panel discussion and presentation on "Collecting Burney," including a display of first editions, related editions and manuscript letters.

Participants can register for the full conference, including the day's talks at the Los Angeles Public Library, refreshments, the four-course dinner at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel, and the reading of selections from a Burney comedy organized by Juliet McMaster, for a fee of \$95 U.S. each. Those who cannot attend the sessions during the day may register for the dinner meeting and the play reading alone for a price of \$72 U.S. each.

Every North American member of the society for 2003-2004, and those newly registered for 2005, as well as international members who pay their dues to the North American treasurer, have been sent a registration packet. If you have not yet received the registration materials, contact Lucy Magruder, P.O. Box 1267, Tubac, AZ, 85646. Registration deadline is Sept. 27.

Many Burney Society members are also members of the Jane Austen Society of North America, which is meeting from Friday, Oct. 8, through Sunday, Oct. 10, at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel, where the Burney Society is having its dinner.

Those Burney Society members who would like to stay at the Biltmore can make a reservation using the following information: Millennium Biltmore Hotel, 506 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90071.

For reservations, call: Continental USA: (800) 245-8673; International callers: (213) 612-1575. Rates for a classic room: \$119 (single or double; this is the reduced JASNA rate); Club room: \$239; Executive Suite: \$250.

To receive the hotel's reduced conference rate, which is \$119 for a classic room, you must identify yourself as a JASNA attendee. But that's not a problem for JASNA because the more rooms JASNA rents, the more credits they get towards their public rooms.

Any Burney Society members interested in joining JASNA, or attending the JASNA conference, can find all the information needed at the society's web page: www.jasna.org.

Anyone with questions about the Burney Society conference can contact Lucy Magruder, Secretary/Treasurer, at Lucy@magruder.org, 520-398-8587; or Paula Stepankowsky, President, Burney Society at p_stepankowsky@tdn.com, 360-636-3763.

Burney Letter

The semi-annual newsletter of the Burney Society, which includes members in Canada, Great Britain, the United States and elsewhere.

President: Paula L. Stepankowsky
Editor: Lorna J. Clark

Address correspondence regarding newsletter articles to Dr. Lorna Clark, Burney Centre, McGill University, 853 Sherbrooke Str. W., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3A 2T6 or to lclarklj@aol.com

Membership in The Burney Society is available for \$15 (US) annually in the United States and Canada, and £12 annually in Great Britain. To request membership information, or to notify the society of a change of address, write in the United States and Canada to: Lucy Magruder, P.O. Box 1267, Tubac, AZ, USA 85646 (or lucy@magruder.org). In Great Britain, write David and Janet Tregear, 7 Market Avenue, Chichester, West Sussex, England PO19 1JU.

-----Electronic Publication-----

In an effort to cut costs, the Burney Society is working towards electronic publication of the newsletter for those members who prefer it. We would send the newsletter as an attachment via e-mail; the text could then be downloaded and printed or simply read on screen. Any member who prefers to receive future issues by this method, please notify the Secretaries/Treasurers: in the UK, David and Janet Tregear, tregear david@hotmail.com, or in North America, lucy@magruder.org

THE BURNEY SOCIETY—BRITISH BRANCH

By David and Janet Tregear

There was an attendance of 20 members and 2 guests at the Annual Meeting of the UK

Branch of the Burney Society at Juniper Hall, Mickleham on 13 June 2004. Many of these had been to Morning Service at St. Michael's Church, Mickleham at 10 a.m., at which Karin Fernald read extracts from Fanny Burney's collection of devotional writings (**see story below**).

Before a buffet lunch there was a lively talk by Paula Byrne on Fanny Burney's theatrical connections, as evident from her correspondence and journals and other contemporary sources. Although it is clear that the society of her time held a disapproving view of actresses, it is also evident that Burney herself was far from such a condemnation, yet she was too shy ever to have ventured on the stage. The age was quite taken with private theatricals, and they were certainly fashionable amongst the highest class of society, despite the published satire of Jane Austen in *Mansfield Park*.

After lunch, Dr. Sarah Burton gave a talk on the literary links between the family of Charles and Mary Lamb and their contemporaries, including Martin Burney. It became manifest that intense family pressure on Mary might well have caused her breakdown, which itself pushed Charles to heights of literary output, besides his care for his sister. Lively extracts from Charles Lamb's writings were read, including a few of his jokes, which are

still quite capable of stirring an amused response, even if (like last season's flowers) the passage of years has changed the way in which they are taken.

In the short interval before tea and cake, business matters were discussed. The joint Secretaries/Treasurers reported an evident decline of membership, which, at the time of meeting, stood at just 33. The annual accounts to 6 June 2004 were circulated, and talk largely focused on the considerable expenditure for publications and postage. Enquiry would be made of those in North America if a saving might be achieved by using electronic communication to send the contents of the *Burney Letter* via e-mail to England, leaving it to be distributed by the same method to all members who could receive such messages. The considerable extra cost of *The Burney Journal* could not perhaps be modified in a like way, but budgeting might be made easier if good estimates could be had from North America.

Editor's note: The cost of producing a 16-page newsletter (printing and mailing from Canada) is approximately £1.50 per copy; then there may be general expenses added in. We are currently exploring the costs of producing and mailing the letter from within the UK (for UK members), as well as offering the option of receiving it electronically.

Mickleham Church Service

By Bill Fraser

It was a delightful coincidence that our meeting was set for Fanny's birthday and that we were able to join the congregation at Mickleham Church to celebrate the village's connection with the Burneys, General d'Arblay and the Lockes of Norbury—the church contains a Norbury chapel with the Locke family pew.

The church itself is a splendid example of an English village parish church with a complex history probably dating from the reign of Edgar (919-975); it is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Many of the fine Norman features survive although "restored" by the Victorians—and there are remnants of the Saxon church too.

The village of Mickleham has all the charm of weathered brick and stone, surrounded by low wooded hills, which we expect of the English countryside. The church stands opposite the "Running Horse" pub and through the wicket-gate into the well kept graveyard, Fanny would have entered on 28th July 1793 to marry Alexandre d'Arblay. Dr Burney had been very reluctant to give the engagement his blessing but her brother James gave her away with the Phillippes, the Lockes and

the Comte de Narbonne in attendance. The church celebrates the event with a fine copper plate alongside a copy of Fanny's portrait by Edward Francisco.

We were made welcome by the Rector, the Reverend Barbara Steadman-Allen and by the smiles of the choir members. There were two baptisms so the singing was vigorous and the worship embracing. Karin Fernald and Kate Chisholm had researched Fanny's devotional day book, entitled "Consolatory Extracts" in the British Library, and Karin read extracts to an attentive congregation:

I am convinced that bad nerves, as one is pleased to call the indulgence of humour, are little short of a mortal sin. They disgrace our best principles, grieve our best friends, hurt our companions, and make one's whole being ungrateful to God.

It is chiefly in the decline of life, when amusements fail, & the importunate passions subside, that peevishness becomes a dangerous assailer. We must then endeavour to substitute some pursuits in the place of those which should only engage us in the beginning of our course: reading, rational conversation, reflection, and above all conversing with God.

The world is filled with objects of beauty & delight, though, wrapped up in the wretched but necessary cares of every Day, we can scarcely

cast a passing glance upon them, but get over one hour after another as well as we can, & seem to wait for some better time of enjoyment, when our capacity shall be improved & our leisure uninterrupted. Sure 'tis a proof: This is no resting place for Man!

The "Consolatory Extracts" are taken mainly from the writings of Catherine Talbot (1721-1770) who was brought up in the household of Thomas Secker, Bishop of Bristol, Oxford and later Archbishop of Canterbury (1758-1768). She and her mother ran the household at Lambeth Palace. After her death her "Bluestocking" friends Elizabeth Carter, Mrs Montagu and Hester Chapone published her writings as "Reflections on the Seven days of the week." It was an immediate success and Fanny drew much consolation from the work especially after the death of her sister Susan and later of her husband.

These readings fitted admirably with the ensuing sermon.

Some of the d'Arblays' happiest times were spent in the Mickleham valley at Camilla Cottage, and it was an enchanting start to a memorable day at Juniper Hall that we were able to join a lively congregation and remember that Fanny would have worshipped here too on many occasions.

Bath On-Goings: St Swithin's Walcot

By Bill Fraser

The Church council has received a faculty from the Diocese of Bath and Wells which enables them to go ahead with the refurbishment program outlined in the last Newsletter. This, of course, includes the restoration of the d'Arblay sarcophagus and the commemorative plaque. The diocese has requested some further information on the design and wording of the plaque but this is just a matter of record.



The d'Arblay cenotaph in Walcot churchyard (from 1906 article of Clement Shorter, photography Peter Troy, Bath City Libraries).

Desmond Brown, the churchwarden in charge of the project, has asked that we carry out our project next spring when the contractors will be laying the path for improved disabled access through the north garden past the sarcophagus to the church. I have asked our two proposed contractors for confirmation of cost and their availability to carry out the work early next year with completion ahead of our July 2005 conference.

We will need funds to cover the projected cost of £2,300 – which includes a contribution to the restoration of the railings that surround the garden.

Bath Conference 3/4 July 2005

(PLEASE NOTE SLIGHT CHANGE OF DATE)

Although the proposed conference venue at the Bath Spa University campus at Newton St Loe would have been idyllic and embracing, we came to the conclusion, with great regret, that the financial implications had some risk for our small society. The Director of the Holburne Museum in Bath, Christopher Woodward,

had indicated previously that we might consider the museum as a venue provided the booking was for a Monday when the museum is closed. Very generously, the Museum is providing the second-floor gallery for our use free of charge on Monday 4 July; we shall meet and eat surrounded by Gainsboroughs and other treasures of the Museum's collection. In addition to some exceptionally fascinating papers around the topic of *Fanny Burney and Her Circle*, led by Peter Sabor, who will talk on Fanny Burney and Dr Johnson, we shall have the opportunity to discuss the Museum's purchase of 4 Sydney Place where Jane Austen and her family lived from 1801 to 1805. The Museum is proposing to use this elegant house, almost opposite the Museum, to present Jane Austen and her writing to a new generation. They wish to include in this environment space for other 18th-century Bath literary figures and would welcome a Burney presence

On Sunday 3 July, we shall meet at St Swithin's Walcot to celebrate the restoration of the sarcophagus dedicated to the memory of Mme d'Arblay and her son Alex and the erection of a plaque that will outline her Bath life.

One of our foremost poets U.A. Fanthorpe (Queen's medal for poetry) has promised an ode to mark the occasion. We shall then walk to Bath Abbey where Evensong will be sung by the superb Abbey choir with the music of composers within the Burney circle (our especial thanks to Peter King, the Director of Music) and a suitable commemoration of FB.

After this special occasion, we shall refresh ourselves with tea, probably at Abbey Church House.

Accommodation bookings will be the responsibility of individuals, but a list of bed and breakfasts and hotels is available soon on the Bath tourism website at www.visitbath.co.uk.

The **provisional cost** of attending the conference will be £40 for Evensong and Tea at the Abbey on Sunday 3 July *and* the day of talks at the Holburne Museum on Monday 4 July, including lunch and a tour of 4 Sydney Place; £35 for the Holburne day only; £15 for Evensong and Tea only. These prices are **to be confirmed.**

Bath Fund-raising Efforts

By Paula Stepankowsky

The Burney Society has officially launched the fund-raising effort to restore the table-top monument erected over the graves of Frances Burney d'Arblay and her son, Alexander, at Walcot Church in Bath.

The monument was placed by the Burney family early in the 20th century after the original erected in 1840 upon Madame d'Arblay's death had disintegrated. While the gravesite was originally near the mortuary chapel across the street and down the hill from Walcot Church, parish authorities had the replacement monument moved to a triangular enclosure next to the church itself in the 1950s.

Unfortunately, it appears that records describing what happened to the d'Arblay family remains at the time the stone was moved, and even before that, are incomplete, leaving the whereabouts of the remains a mystery at this time. The Burney

Society is working to learn further details of these events.

Nevertheless, the monument itself is cracking, stained, covered with moss and in urgent need of restoration. Professional estimates indicate that it will cost between £1,500 and £1,800 to restore the monument, as well as to erect a plaque describing the stone and celebrating Burney as a writer.

The Burney Society has undertaken to raise this sum of money in time to rededicate the stone during a joint UK/North American conference scheduled for July 3 and 4, 2005, in Bath. The society would also like to raise as much as an additional £500 to help the parish restore the Georgian railing around the small churchyard.

Those who would like to make contributions to this project should send their cheques (so designated) to David and Janet Tregear, 7 Market Ave., Chichester, West Sussex, UK, PO19 1JU, Lucy Magruder, Treasurer, PO Box 1267, Tubac, AZ 85646.

Susan Burney

Continued from p. 1

Locke at Norbury Park. (Frances also became a close friend of the Lockes at the same time, and it was during a later visit to Norbury Park in January 1791 that she first met Alexandre d'Arblay, at the time living at nearby Juniper Hall). They had three children: Frances (Fanny), born in 1782, Norbury, born in 1785 and named after Norbury Park, where Susan had gone into premature labour and had been confined, and John William James (Willy), born in 1791.

By 1787 the marriage had begun to deteriorate, and by the mid-1790s it had all but collapsed. Perhaps because of the political unrest in Ireland, Phillips decided that he should in future live on the estate he had inherited at Belcotton, near Drogheda, Co. Louth. At the end of 1795 he went to Ireland, taking the ten-year-old Norbury with him. The cottage at Mickleham was given up, and Susan and the other two children were obliged to "camp out" with her brothers and sisters in London. Phillips returned to London the following August, demanding that Susan join him in Ireland with Frances and Willy. Much against her will, but realizing that if she did not do so she would probably never see Norbury again, she acquiesced, and travelled to Ireland with Phillips, Fanny, and Willy in late October 1796.

At Belcotton, Susan found a cold, damp farmhouse almost entirely lacking in amenities, and a husband who was openly carrying on a love affair with his second cousin Jane Brabazon. Here, cut off from her family, virtually abandoned by her husband, and in deteriorating health, she lived until almost the end of her life. By September 1799, members of her family, realizing the full gravity of her situation and her steadily deteriorating health, persuaded Phillips to allow her to return home to England. She survived the sea crossing, landing at Parkgate, near Chester, on 30 December, but died there a few days later, on 6 January 1800.

Until comparatively recently, Susan has led a fairly shadowy existence on the fringes of biographies of her more famous sister and father. Yet her life is well documented through her own letters and letter-journals, most of them addressed to Frances. They date from three main periods in her life: 1779-80, before her marriage, when she was still living in the family home; 1787-90, when she was at Mickleham and largely occupied with her young family; and 1795-9, during the final, unhappy, period of her life. Only a small number have been published. Brimley Johnson included a selection of the journals of 1787-9 and 1795-90 in his *Frances Burney and the Burneys* (1926), and Susan's celebrated eye-witness account of the Gordon riots in June 1780 has long been familiar to historians. In 1995 an important study of opera in London made further extensive use of the 1779-80 journals, its authors remarking that Susan was "the best critic we have encountered, and by far the most important source on opera in the period." This was the beginning of a new interest in Susan's journals among music historians, the most recent outcome of which has been Ian Woodfield's *Salomon and the Burneys: Private Patronage and a Public Career* (Aldershot, 2003).

Susan's journals are of great importance, and deserve to be better known. They are of obvious interest and relevance to Burney scholars, both as the counterparts of Frances's journals and for their contribution to our understanding of the activities of other members of the family. But they are also important to other

communities of readers, most notably to historians and music historians. And of course, the story of Susan's tragic life has considerable interest in its own right.

It was a lecture by Kate Chisholm in London in November 1999 that first alerted me to Susan and to the importance of her journals. This in time led to a growing conviction that they should be published, in whole or in part. The result, some time later, was the Susan Burney Letters Project, the aim of which was to produce a complete web-based edition of the journals and a print edition of representative selections, drawn from every period of Susan's life. Further details are on the project website, which contains an outline of Susan's life, the rationale for the project, and four annotated extracts from the journals.

Applications for funding for the project over the last three years have all been unsuccessful. A large part of the problem has undoubtedly been the sheer size of the undertaking. The journals amount to around 650,000 words, and to produce a complete electronic edition and a print edition of selections would necessitate the employment of two post-doctoral research assistants over a period of three years and would thus be extremely expensive. Perhaps not surprisingly, funding bodies have regarded the cost as too high, given Susan's relatively unknown status and all the other competing calls on their limited resources.

At present, the project as originally conceived remains in limbo. But I am exploring the possibility of proceeding only with the print edition of selections. This would be a far smaller and more manageable project that could be undertaken by one person, within a relatively short period of time, and with fairly modest resources, and which I believe would be of value and interest to a wide range of readers.

The Susan Burney Letters Project website is at:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/hrc/projects/burney/>

It contains the following extracts from Susan's journals: (a) Pacchierotti's benefit night, King's Theatre, London, 9 March 1780; (b) The Gordon riots, St. Martin's Lane, London, 8 June 1780; (c) Sea passage, Holyhead to Ireland, 31 October 1796; (d) Belcotton, Co. Louth, Ireland, 9 October 1798.

Susan Burney's journey to Ireland, October 1796

Safe landed at Dublin will I know suffice to my beloved Fanny and my Mrs Locke shd it not be possible for me to say more - We have had a tedious passage of above one and forty hours, and I am yet wondering to find myself alive to tell it. We embarked Saturday eveg at 9 o'clock, and were not landed here till after two this afternoon-- The first moment I cd hold my pen and find my crumpled Paper, wch I had in readiness, I began two letters --one to my dearest Father, and the other this present

Philip Olleson is Reader in Historical Musicology at the University of Nottingham. He has written extensively on the composer and organist Samuel Wesley (1766-1837) and on aspects of the social history of music in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His The Letters of Samuel Wesley: Professional and Social Correspondence, 1797-1837 was published in 2001, and Samuel Wesley: The Man and his Music, a life-and works study, in 2003. He is currently working on Dr Charles Burney, as the editor of Vol. 3 of the complete edition of his letters.

Matching Pictures

By Hester Davenport

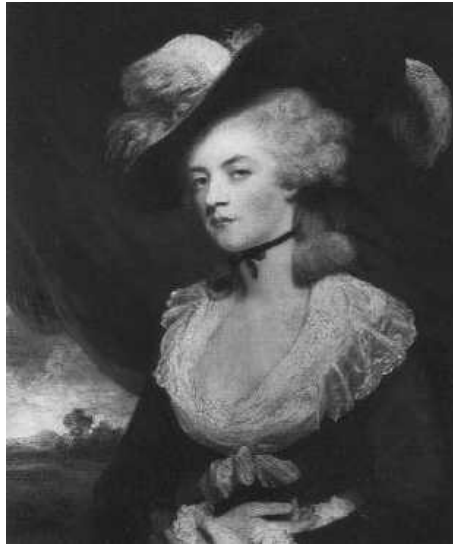
Large projects can have small beginnings. The biography which I have just written had its origins when I was still working on *Faithful Handmaid: Fanny Burney at the Court of King George III*, and my eye fell on a postcard reproduction which I kept framed on a desk. It was a 1782 portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds of the beautiful Mary Robinson, actress and first mistress of the future George IV. She is buried in the churchyard nearby and I had once written a short article about her for a local history magazine. Now I saw the picture differently, for I realised that it was the mirror image of Edward Burney's first painting of his cousin, made in August 1782 at Chessington.



Edward Francesco Burney, Fanny Burney, 1782, Parham Park, West Sussex, by kind permission.

Edward shows Fanny sitting with her hands gracefully arranged in her lap, and wearing what she describes as “the black vandyke Gown, with slashed lilac sleeves, & very elegant.” She modestly declares that the finished picture is so flattering that no one would “guess he ever saw me without the name beneath.” But what neither she nor seemingly anyone else realised was that Edward had deliberately imitated the highly-praised portrait of Mrs Robinson which Sir Joshua had shown in the Royal Academy exhibition earlier that year. Mary wears a similar black vandyke dress; a similar large black hat with feather is on her head and a black velvet ribbon

round her neck, and she too holds her lace-cuffed hands across her lap. Both portraits are half-lengths and the sitters, in three-quarter profile, are shown against a red velvet curtain pulled back to reveal a small landscape. There are differences: Mary is placed on the right of the canvas, looking left but turning her gaze challengingly outwards, whereas Fanny, placed on the left of the picture, looks steadily towards its right-hand side. Fanny's low-cut dress is filled in with a firmly-pinned and substantial piece of material; Mary's bosom is only lightly covered with the flimsiest of scarves.



Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mrs. Robinson (1782), Waddesdon, The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust), by kind permission

I was struck by Edward Burney's imitation of a portrait he must have been familiar with from Reynolds' studio (did he ever meet Mary when she came for her sittings?) and wondered why he did it. Was he trying to suggest that for him Fanny could match Mrs Robinson in beauty? Was it an exercise in artistic imitation? Or just a little joke? Whatever Edward's motive it occurred to me that some day I might repeat the process, turning from a verbal portrait of the “good” girl to the “bad,” from the woman enthusiastically kissed by the King in Kew Gardens to the one whose debts he had reluctantly paid to save his son from a “shameful scrape.”

Shy Fanny and flamboyant Mary had,

at least superficially, little in common. In August 1782 while Fanny was enjoying the quiet life at Chessington Mary was engaged in an intense and public relationship with Charles James Fox. But she was only a year away from the devastating illness which made her a cripple for the rest of her life and put an end to her spectacular career as “The Perdita” (the nickname she acquired after catching the Prince of Wales' eye while in the role). Thereafter Mary, who had always written poetry, carved out a new life as a writer in order to support herself and her daughter. The Mary Robinson of the 1790s was cast in much the same mould as Frances Burney, peddling orthodox morality in her novels, and like Fanny expressing abhorrence at the connotations of the word “novel.”

It was intriguing to find a newspaper advertisement for a work by Mary Robinson next to one for Fanny's 1793 pamphlet *Brief Reflexions relative to the Emigrant French Clergy*, the only kind of close contact the two women ever achieved; one can imagine Fanny running from a room rather than risk meeting with the dreadful Mrs Robinson. Yet she could have discovered a woman of charm and intelligence, of charitable and sympathetic disposition (Mary's admiration of Fanny is shown in her inclusion of Mme d'Arblay in a list of female “geniuses” in her 1799 *Letter to the Women of England*). They shared more interests and attitudes than Fanny would ever have admitted; maybe in painting them looking alike but in different directions, Edward Burney was recognising that, though opposites, they were sisters under the skin.

Hester Davenport is a writer and former teacher of Literature at East Berkshire College. She lives in Old Windsor near the churchyard in which Mary Robinson is buried. She has published a work on local history, Writers in Windsor, and a collection for children, Fifty Unsolved Mysteries. Her biography of Frances Burney, Faithful Handmaid: Fanny Burney at the Court of King George III (2000) was well-received; her latest work, The Prince's Mistress: A Life of Mary Robinson was published in July 2004.

Hemlow Prize 2004

By Peter Sabor

There were eight entrants for the inaugural Hemlow Prize, awarded annually by the Burney Society to a student writing the best essay on Frances Burney. The winner in 2004 is **Emily Anderson**, for her essay entitled "Staged Suffering in Frances Burney's *Cecilia*, *Camilla*, and *The Wanderer*: How a Playwright Writes Novels."

This polished and thoroughly researched essay makes perceptive connections between Burney's own frustrating experiences as a would-be dramatist and the expressions of female suffering portrayed in her novels. In her treatment of staged suffering, Emily Anderson skilfully combines analysis of Burney as novelist and playwright without subordinating one to the other. Anderson shows how frustrations in the dramatic realm find expression in the novels and how Burney allows her female characters to dramatize authentic forms of expression.

The distinguished essays submitted by Elizabeth Johnson and Elizabeth Maclean were also commended by the judges.

The winner of the Hemlow Prize receives \$250 (U.S.), plus publication of the essay in *The Burney Journal*, the society's annual journal. Ms. Anderson will be given the prize at the society's Los Angeles conference, where she will also present the paper.

Call for Papers

The 13th Annual Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers Conference has issued a call for papers. The 2005 theme is *Women's Texts and Cultural Contexts*; the conference will be held on April 14-17, 2005 at Hilton Lafayette, hosted by the Dept. of English, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Keynote speakers are Catherine, Linda Hughes, and Susan Staves. A highlight of the conference will be a production of *The Wifings*, and a roundtable with *Wifings* expert Clayton Delery.

A wide range of papers on the conference theme and related issues are welcome. Topics might include but should not be limited to the following:

- Women Writing Culture
- Performing Culture
- Female Gothic
- Women and Sensation Fiction
- Religion and Women's Writing
- Women and Science
- Women's Professions
- Women in Journalism
- New Women and their Impact
- Domestic Ideologies
- Writing for Children
- Images of the Woman Poet
- Subversive Women
- Women's Bodies/ Bodies of Women
- Mothers as Cultural Icons
- Women and Empire
- Women and the Public Sphere

Please submit 1-2 page abstracts for individual presentations and panel proposals (including the name of a moderator) by October 31, 2004. Please include a cover sheet with your name, address, phone number, email address, institutional affiliation and a brief biographical paragraph (but do not include any identifying information on your abstract). Proposals may be sent to bwwc@louisiana.edu or to:

British Women Writers Conference
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Department of English
PO Box 44691
Lafayette, LA 70504

For more details, visit the website at www.louisiana.edu/bwwc

Austen and Burney Face Off

The American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies 2005 Conference to be held in Las Vegas from 31st March to 3rd April will feature a panel entitled:

A Vegas Title-Fight:

The Burney Society vs. the Austen Society

Jane Austen's adoration for the writings of Frances Burney is well-documented, yet Austen continues to be studied, taught, and credentialized as "the" late-eighteenth century novelist. Although Austen's fictional characters frequently reflect on Burney's actual novels, it is curious that a critical dialogue that examines the relationship between Burney and Austen has been marginalized. Acknowledging the similarity of both woman writers in their generic choices and eighteenth-century popularity, this panel proposes to open a critical dialogue between critics of Burney and Austen by spotlighting papers that address Burney and Austen as individual writers, and also as a pairing that exhibits many 'anxieties of influence.' Such an analysis might also allow us to understand why Austen, while writing the majority of her works during the nineteenth century, is still considered to be grounded in (and taught as) an eighteenth-century textual tradition.

This panel welcomes papers that explore and clarify the literary contributions made by either Burney or Austen (individually) or Burney and Austen (relationally) to establishing an English literary tradition via letter- and novel-writing. Topics may include, but are not limited to, Burney's and/or Austen's use of epistolarity, conduct and dramatic literature, urban landscapes, strategies of interiority, and journal-writing as well as Burney's and/or Austen's representations of gender, sexuality, nationality, and the marriage market. Papers that address Burney's influence upon Austen's writing style and her generic choices are also welcome so that the panel may outline answers as to what a critical dialogue between Burney and Austen can contribute to critical narratives about the eighteenth-century novel and women writers.

One to two page abstracts should be sent via post, fax, and/or email (and be received by 15 September 2004) to: Dr. Erik Bond, Department of Humanities, 3074 CB, The University of Michigan-Dearborn, 4901 Evergreen Road, Dearborn, MI 48128, Fax: 313/593-1902, E-mail: erikbond@umd.umich.edu

Burney News From Around the World

Director of Burney Centre Speaks to Johnsonians

The annual dinner for the Johnsonian Society will feature a lecture on Frances Burney and Samuel Johnson by Burney Society patron Prof. Peter Sabor. Peter is the eminent editor of the *Court Journals* of Frances Burney, as well as Director of the Burney Centre at McGill University. In his wide-ranging and versatile career, he has edited works by Sarah Fielding, Thomas Carlyle, Samuel Richardson, John Cleland, and Jane Austen; he has also prepared critical collections concerning Richardson and Horace Walpole. As Blum Lecturer, he has been invited to address the Johnsonians at their annual meeting on Sunday November 21st 2004 at the Huntington Library in California.

Mole Valley Arts Festival

A talk on "Fanny Burney in Surrey" will be part of the Mole Valley Arts Alive Festival held between 8 and 31st October 2004. Linda Heath, president of the Leatherhead & District Local History Society, will describe the events leading up to Burney's coming to live in Surrey and the part of her life that she spent in Bookham, Mickleham and Westhumble between 1793 and 1801. The talk will be given in the Templeton Room at Juniper Hall (Mickleham, nr. Dorking) in which the great romance of Burney's life began when she met General Alexandre d'Arblay. Admission (which includes afternoon tea on arrival) is £5; the box office number is 01306 881717; for more information, call 01306 879188, or access it through the website at www.mole-valley.gov.uk

Now in its eighth year, the Arts Alive Festival (sponsored by the Mole Valley District Council) celebrates the creative talents in the Mole Valley, and has established itself as a leading cultural event in the district. Councillor Maurice Homewood, a member of the organising committee, tries to ensure every year that a Burney event will take place in the famous Templeton Room at Juniper Hall.

With its gracious dimensions and ornate plaster relief, the Templeton Room seems a fitting venue; in fact, so inspiring

is the hall and the spirits which haunt it, that it makes the setting for a play, written by Mr. Homewood. Entitled "Angel Trap," it depicts the period of time in 1793 in which a group of French émigrés were gathered at Juniper Hall under the patronage of William Locke. The remarkable group included the Comte de Narbonne (lately Minister of War in France), the politician Talleyrand, and Mme de Staël, the feminist author. In this highly charged and intellectual atmosphere, romance blossomed. The precise details of Burney's first encounter with d'Arblay are unknown, but they are imaginatively recreated in the play which evokes the Juniper circle and the era in a vivid and convincing fashion.

It would be wonderful to see "Angel Trap" performed in the very room in which it is set; perhaps this would be a worthy endeavour to consider for future meetings of the Burney Society.

Old Windsor

The launch of the latest biography by Hester Davenport (author of *The Faithful Handmaid: Fanny Burney at the Court of King George III*) was celebrated with much fanfare in the tree-shaded graveyard near her home in Old Windsor. The last resting-place of the beautiful Mary Robinson, mistress to the Prince of Wales, contrasts in its peacefulness with the more colourful episodes of her life. A celebrated actress, she attracted the attention of George, Prince of Wales when playing Perdita, which became her nickname in the scandal sheets of the day. When the affair ended, she blackmailed the prince for £5000; three years later, at age 26, she became partially paralysed and turned to a literary career to support herself. Davenport's biography, *The Prince's Mistress: A Life of Mary Robinson* (Sutton), portrays her as a woman of courage, evoking for the reader the theatrical and social world of the Georgian era.

The publication of the work was fittingly celebrated in the churchyard with several Burney Society members in attendance, including Kate Chisholm, VP for the UK branch. A short ceremony was

held to present Mary Robinson with the laurel wreath she yearned for (if only metaphorically). Flower petals were strewn on the grave to a peal of church-bells; the scent, colour and joyous bells made for a wonderful combination.

In the evening, an audience gathered for the official launch at the bookshop; actress Karin Fernald graced the occasion with a dramatic reading from Robinson's *Memoirs*. Refreshments included a cake, iced in blue with the book's title, with a miniature of Perdita in the middle; dressed splendidly and topped with an ostrich-plumed hat, she held on her bosom a tiny Prince of Wales.

The biography, published in July 2004, is available from Sutton Publishing.

Burney Manuscript Find

In Sydney, Australia, Michael Kassler is still on the trail of Burney manuscripts. Via the Internet, he has discovered some correspondence between Charles Burney, Mus. D. and Johann Christian Hüttner which is not listed in Hemlow's *Catalogue of Burney Manuscripts*. These letters are held in the Cumbria Record Office at Carlisle, bundled in with letters from Charles Burney to Lord Lowther.

Hüttner is a somewhat elusive figure, and the episode of his connection to Charles Burney an interesting one. He had acted as tutor to Sir George Staunton and accompanied him on Lord Macartney's embassy to China in 1792. On the return of the embassy to England, the Staunton family made no effort to find employment or otherwise provide for Hüttner, an oversight which Burney felt was "disgraceful." Burney stepped into the breach, approaching a wealthy nobleman, William Lowther, the Earl of Lonsdale, on Hüttner's behalf, who recommended him to the Foreign Office. Despite a temporary falling-out, Hüttner remained grateful for Burney's patronage to the end of his life.

Michael Kassler also sends word of his new book being published by Ashgate on *The English Bach Awakening*, which includes material on Charles Burney, Mus. D. A chapter written by Philip Olleson is scheduled to appear in December 2004.

Tracing Burney Ancestors

Bridget Lee writes from New Zealand, asking for help in tracing her Burney ancestors. Apparently, her family has descended from a man called Peter Martin Burney, who was born in Jamaica c. 1845 and arrived in Christchurch on the SS Airedale on 24 Jan 1861, aged 16. (No record can be found of his passage; was he a stowaway, part of the crew or a bonded slave?)

He would later marry at St. Andrews, Presbyterian Manse, Christchurch on 8 March 1875 aged 28, Ellen McGrath, an emigrant from Yougal, Ireland. Peter Burney was illiterate and signed his marriage certificate with an "X." Together, the couple had nine children, one of whom, Mabel Mary Burney, (1878-1963) was the writer's great-grandmother.

Peter Martin Burney died in 1899 and was buried in the Roman Catholic section at Linwood Cemetery, Christchurch.

While family tradition has suggested that Peter Martin may have been an illegitimate son of Captain James Burney, fathered on one of his voyages with Captain Cook, this would not be plausible: the last voyage ended in 1780 and James Burney was long dead decades before the birth of Peter Martin Burney. The alignment of generations would fit more plausibly the offspring of James' son, Martin Charles Burney (1788-1852), although Martin had no known progeny, nor did he visit the West Indies. There were, however, other branches of the Burney family who emigrated to America in the eighteenth-century.

There are tantalizing questions about this Burney, as Bridget Lee notes: "Was there a connection with the Burney Family in UK that would have assured Peter Burney of a place of the SS Airedale bound for New Zealand? If Peter was illiterate...how did he come to learn of New Zealand?"

Anyone with any information or suggestions to offer, please contact Bridget Lee at bridget001@actrix.co.nz

Famous Forebears

A Society member from Eastbourne, East Sussex writes of her famous forebears, not Burneys but someone who may have been known to the family.

Pauline Suett Barbieri is intrigued by her ancestor, Richard "Dicky" Suett (1755-1805), a famous comic actor in his day. A star at Drury Lane theatre for 25 years, he was a favourite of George III and Charles Lamb, who recorded him, as he did James Burney and his family, in his *Essays of Elia*.

In an article published in *Jane Austen's Regency World*, Barbieri outlines Suett's life and career. Born in Chelsea in 1755 into a musical family, Richard first sang in public in 1771 at Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and the Haymarket. The following season he married Louisa West, a dancer at Drury Lane Theatre, and had two sons, both of whom would appear at Drury Lane in due course.

Richard was fond of public houses and "low company" and "frequently used spirits to get himself ready for a night's work" so that portraying "drunken characters" became one of his specialties. He was a talented musician, who set the music for some of the songs performed at Drury Lane, as well as other musical compositions. In the 1790's, he acted in Cumberland's *The Jew* (1794) and Coleman's *The Iron Chest* (1796); his last appearance was in June 1805, a month before his death. Suett was buried in St. Paul's churchyard, his passing noted with regret by actor Richard Kemble.

It is conceivable that Suett, who figured in the musical and theatrical world of London, knew or at least met some of the Burneys. There is also the connection with Chelsea, where Charles Burney was living at the time of Suett's death. Another coincidence is noted by Barbieri; prior to Frances d'Arblay's play *Edwy & Elgiva* being performed in 1795 at Drury Lane, Suett had just acted there in *A Wheel of Fortune*. Is it conceivable that the playwright and the actor might have met? (although it should be noted that Mme d'Arblay, living in the country and preoccupied with her young son, was not able to take an active interest in the production). Another thread in common comes through George III, who was an admirer of Suett's talents during the decade that Burney spent at court.

The search for family origins can lead into fascinating places and eras, as Paula Barbieri has found in delving into the London theatrical world of the late eighteenth-century. Not only has she

researched her famous ancestor, she has also inherited some of his creativity, and publishes poetry, short stories and articles. So inspired was she on learning about "Dicky" that she had "the feeling to tell him about [her] life. The result is an autobiography in the form of a sort of Rabelasian comic monologue structured as a dictionary called 'Spellbound, the Dictionary of a Clown,'" as yet unpublished. A dream of hers is to do a one woman show using extracts from her book.

Frances Burney certainly lived at an interesting time, and our engagement with her leads us to make fascinating acquaintances of our own.

Captain Cook Debate

A recently discovered painting depicting the death of explorer Captain James Cook, to be auctioned by Christie's on Sept. 23rd 2004, has challenged the official version of events that transpired that fateful day.

The watercolour, painted by John Cleveley in 1780, depicts Cook's death in the Hawaiian islands in 1779. It shows Cook, along with some crew members, being attacked by a group of natives bearing spears. The painting is based on a description given by Cleveley's brother James, who was carpenter on Cook's vessel. It shows the British firing their rifles at their attackers.

Up until now, the version generally accepted by historians is the one depicted in a painting by John Webber which is much more flattering to Cook. He depicts Cook as a hero, victim to his own humanity, who orders his men not to fire at the poorly armed natives and is felled by a blow from behind.

James Burney was also a member of the crew on Cook's last voyage, along with Molesworth Phillips (later to marry his sister Susan), who won renown by his apparently heroic actions that day (another story whose truth has been challenged).

The watercolour was recently discovered at a home in Suffolk in south-east England and will be auctioned by Christie's on September 23rd, 2004, along with other fascinating artifacts of the voyages of exploration.

For further details, see Christie's website (Sale 6934, Lots 33-35).

Up at Auction: Burney Signature Fetches Thousands

Results at a recent Sotheby's auction held in New York City on 18 June 2004 show just how valuable a signature of a member of the Burney family can be.

Lot 332, as listed in the catalogue, is a first edition of Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, in half-green morocco, spines "gilt" but "somewhat worn."

Its value, apparently, is the fact of its being the copy owned by Sarah Harriet Burney and signed by the authoress on the cover. The catalogue describes her thus:

'The English novelist Sarah Harriet Burney (1772-1844) was the youngest child of the second marriage of Dr. Charles Burney, and the half-sister of Fanny Burney (Mrs. D'Arblay). She published five novels during her lifetime and her work was admired by Jane Austen herself. In one of Austen's letters, she remarks that she is reading one of Burney's novels for the third time. In turn, Sarah Harriet's publisher sent her Austen's novels and she was one of the earliest readers to recognize the genius of Jane Austen and praise her work to others. Burney was an independent-minded woman, who shocked her acquaintances by, among other things, traveling alone by public conveyance over the Alps. She died alone in a Cheltenham boarding house in 1844.'

Expected to fetch between US \$30,000 to \$35,000, the results exceeded expectations; the lot actually sold for US \$48,000.

By contrast, an "attractive copy" of the first edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (Lot 336), with spines and edges gilt and "minimal wear," fetched less than expected, a mere US \$3,900, and a first edition of Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, Lot 189, sold for just US \$1080.

Two works by D. H. Lawrence (Lots 212, 213) meanwhile did not sell.

Recent Publications

2004 has shown itself to be another *annus mirabilis* for Burney publications; no less than three monographs have hit the bookstores, all focused on Burney or members of her family.

First past the post is the study by Burney society member, Francesca Saggini, *La Messinscena dell'Identità Teatro e Teatralità nel romanzo inglese del Settecento*, published by Sette Città. For those fluent in Italian, this promises a thoroughly researched analysis of theatricality in the English novel, with several chapters dealing directly with Burney's works.

Just this summer, German scholar, Mascha Gemmeke has published a study based on her doctoral dissertation, *Francesca Burney and the Female Bildungsroman*. Attractively produced by Peter Lang Press, this genre study promises to solve many of the "puzzling complexities" of Burney's last work, long overlooked by critics, by reading it as a *bildungsroman*.

Hot off the press is a study by Linda Kelly, *Susanna, the Captain & the Castrato: Scenes from the Burney Salon, 1779-80*, published by Starhaven Books. Author of *Juniper Hall*, Linda Kelly focuses here on Burney's favourite sister, Susanna, and her unspoken romance with the castrato singer Pachierotti during his triumphant season in London, 1779-80. Drawing from Susan's still-unpublished journals, she shows the wealth of material, as yet untapped, in the family manuscripts, which can yield valuable insight into Georgian cultural life.

All three of these books will be reviewed in future issues of *The Burney Letter*.

Other Newsletters of Interest

Burney Society members who are intrigued by Frances Burney, her life and times, are likely to find interest in newsletters published by other societies focused on literary figures of the same period.

A long-time favourite is the *East-Central Intelligencer*, the newsletter of one of the regional associations of the American Eighteenth-Century Society. Published in journal format, the *Intelligencer* can be read with pleasure from cover to cover, a delightful mix

which reflects the wide-ranging interests and collegiality of its editor, Jim May. Recent issues include: book reviews; reports of regional meetings of ASECS; updates on research projects or descriptions of scholarly foundations; Members' News; announcements of forthcoming meetings, exhibitions, and lectures, fellowships, contests and publication opportunities; lists of recent publications and even (in true eighteenth-century fashion) "gossip." The *East-Central Intelligencer* comes out three times a year; for membership in ECASECS, contact Dr. Linda E. Merians, 75-49 113th Street, Apt. 2, Forest Hills, NY 11375, USA or at LEmeria@aol.com.

The recent revival of the *Johnsonian News Letter* is now in its second year, under the editorship of Robert DeMaria Jr. of Vassar College; it promises a "lively read" of "news, notes and goings-on in the world of Johnsonians." The latest issue (March 2004) includes reports from Johnsonian societies in London, Southern California and Australia, and articles on "Samuel Johnson and Jane Austen," "Johnson & the Pembroke Latin Grace" and on a Johnsonian Epitaph. It publishes queries and the responses to them, book reviews and remembrances. Lavishly produced, it is published twice a year; subscriptions can be had from Customer Service, The *Johnsonian News Letter*, 6 Prowitt Street, Norwalk, CT 06855, USA.

A new publication concerns another of Frances Burney's friends and admirers, Sir Joshua Reynolds. The *Reynolds Newsletter*, now in its 10th issue, is a very handsome publication, copiously illustrated with photos of Reynolds' paintings, sketches of his home, etc., scattered through its pages. The latest issue contains articles on James Northcote, on the life of one of Reynolds' servants, and on his London home (47 Leicester Square); it includes an unpublished letter and an account of "JR's West Country Revisited." The newsletter got its start when descendants of Reynolds' sisters got together; one of these, Richard Aylmer, is the editor, who is also working on starting up a Reynolds Group. Anyone interested in subscribing, please contact Richard Aylmer, Cromwell's House, 17 Mill Lane, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 OPY, UK; Richard.aymler@talk21.com.

Burney Publications Booming

The explosion of interest in Frances Burney peaked around the turn of the millennium, and has shown no sign of slackening since. Within the last five years, no fewer than four biographies of this woman writer have been published, all of which have found a market.

Kate Chisholm's *Fanny Burney: Her Life*, published by Chatto & Windus in 1998, is now available in paperback and "continues to sell very well," according to her publisher. Reviewing the work for the *Sunday Telegraph*, Claire Tomalin wrote that "Burney is worth remembering,

worth reviving, as a complex and idiosyncratic figure of her times, a rich source of information and indeed a writer of genius."

Claire Harman's *Fanny Burney: A Biography* published by Harper Collins in 2000 has also come out in paperback, as has another biography published the same year, Hester Davenport's *Faithful Handmaid: Fanny Burney at the Court of King George III* (Sutton Publishing). An endorsement by Peter Sabor describes it as a "meticulously researched, richly illustrated study [which] shows why Burney's journals and letters are a major source for our understanding of late eighteenth-century England."

Frances Burney: A Literary Life (Palgrave Macmillan) by the late Janice Thaddeus, pitched to an academic audience, is the only one not available in paperback. Her publishers are "not allowed to release sales data" but refer to favourable reviews which praise the work as "very useful and readable" and predict that it "should secure for Burney a more prominent place in the pride of literary lions."

It seems evident, with these and other publications, that Burney has already secured her place.

Seeking Nominations For Officers, Board

Every two years, The Burney Society elects or re-elects its officers and board members in North America and the United Kingdom. In Los Angeles this year, members will vote on the offices of president, vice president, secretary/treasurer, board member-at-large and advisor/ past president for the United States. U.K. members will vote on officers there at the Bath conference in July of 2005.

To maintain federal non-profit status in the United States, a majority of the board members must be U.S. citizens.

Elaine Bander and Catherine Rodriguez are co-chairing the nomination committee. Anyone interested in nominating someone or in volunteering for one of these positions should contact Elaine at 4395 Hingston Ave., Montreal, PQ, H4A 2J8, Canada, ebander@dawsoncollege.qu.ca, or Cathy at 45 Stoney Glen, Nellysford, VA 22958, cmr9v@cms.mail.virginia.edu.

My First Encounter with Fanny Burney

By Richard Aylmer

In 1996 I "found my way in my imagination" to 47 Leicester Square. Although my interest was focused on Sir Joshua Reynolds and his household, I soon became "acquainted" with some of his visitors and "ventured out into eighteenth-century London." As Fanny Burney lived around the corner in St. Martin's Street, it is not surprising that her name kept on cropping up. "...The eldest Miss Palmer seems to have a better understanding than Offy; but Offy has the most pleasing face..." Fanny Burney recorded in 1778 about Sir Joshua Reynolds's nieces. This was probably the first quotation from her works that I noticed.

I have kept on dipping into Mme d'Arblay's *Diary and Letters*. At first I used an edition published in 1854. Now I have an edition published in 1904. It has interesting illustrations and a better index.

For some, *Evelina* might be an introduction to the eighteenth-century, but for others a more general understanding of those times may be an introduction to *Evelina*. I find it difficult to read quite a lot of eighteenth-century works unless I am looking for something specific in them. I still find *Evelina* rather hard-going, but I also find Sir Walter Scott, who visited Frances d'Arblay in 1826, hard-going. However this does not mean that I have given up. I am looking forward to seeing Kate Glover's play *Evelina* soon. My interest in the eighteenth-century continues to expand. Soon I shall want to understand why Sir Joshua Reynolds stayed up all night to finish *Evelina*. One has to take these things stage by stage.

Although the Burneys' house no longer exists in St Martin's Street, it is worth climbing the steps of the Westminster City Reference Library. A plaque over an inner door commemorates the previous house where the Burneys lived. On the top floor of the

reference library, there is a copy of the *Survey of London Volume XXXIV*. It contains much about the neighbourhood in those days.

This area of London has changed but the name *Orange Street*, just south of the Burney family house, would have been familiar to Fanny Burney. Today we can pass the back of the National Gallery and visit the National Portrait Gallery at the east end of Orange Street. There they all are! Fanny Burney, her father Charles Burney, Joshua Reynolds, Samuel Johnson, James Boswell, Hester Thrale, Omai...

Initially my own interest was sparked off because of a slight family connection, so right from the start I was interested in people. I now edit the *Reynolds Newsletter* which is about Sir Joshua Reynolds his works, his world, and present-day exhibitions, publications and places of interest.

Richard Aylmer b.1932 lives in Oxford (UK) Ruby Wedding April 2004, three grandchildren. Was Army officer, schoolmaster, oil painter; cross-country ski racer. Member of Johnson Society of London, Burney Society (UK); gardener including vegetables. Samuel (d.1745) and Theophila (d.1756) Reynolds of Plympton are two of 128 great x 5 grandparents, through Sir JR's sister Mary Reynolds Mrs. Palmer. Editor Reynolds Newsletter and is in the process of establishing Reynolds Group.

Do you remember your first encounter with Frances Burney? When did you read her, how did you come to discover her, what were your "first impressions"? If you would like to share your story (in 800 words or less) please send it to the Editor.

BOOK REVIEW

The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney, Volume IV: The Streatham Years: Part II, 1780 — 1781. Edited by Betty Rizzo. London: Oxford University Press and Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003. Pp. 569. ISBN 0-7735-0529-6.

By Maggie Lane

In this volume we find Fanny Burney approaching thirty, no longer quite young, still enjoying the backwash of fame and success brought by her first novel but by no means satisfactorily launched in either her professional or her personal life. Indeed literary success, far from smoothing her way, had created its own difficulties for her. On the one hand there was the need to consolidate her literary reputation – not to mention promote her literary wares – by producing more of what the public wanted. This put a great deal of pressure on her and, as a young woman, laid her open to interference by well-meaning older men, from her two daddies to some of the best-known authors of her day: all felt they had a right to advise Fanny Burney what she should write next. Even more teasing to a person of Burney's deep social insecurity was the delicate matter of how a successful woman writer should comport herself in society.

As the Introduction explains, she had no model to follow. Earlier women authors, like actresses and anyone else who sold their talents for money, were held to be vulgar and inelegant if not worse. "Fanny was constrained to invent and perform a new role in the world, that of the thoroughly decorous, respectable, and refined maiden who carefully guarded her genius and her wit." She did carry this off – but the constant strain of

being just entertaining enough to be acceptable to her social betters but not so much of a court jester as to be patronised, taken liberties with or laughed at behind her back, led to a certain prickliness both in her behaviour and in the tone of these journals. One thing we can never accuse Burney of being, however spontaneous and carefree her writing might appear, is unselfconscious. *Nobody* could be more aware of the figure she was cutting and that she intended to cut, both at the time and for posterity. Mrs Thrale saw through all this, and loved her nevertheless, which is enough to make us love *her*.

For if Volume III saw the introduction of Hester and Fanny, Volume IV records them at the height of their friendship, including the 3-month Bath visit of 1780 and the constant invitations to Streatham, before the death of Henry Thrale in 1781 which was to trigger the breach between the two women, though at first it brought them into even greater intimacy and dependence. Added to concerns about her two brothers (whose irresponsible behaviour contrasted with the probity of their sisters calls to mind the Bronte family dynamics), distrust of the man courting her beloved sister Susan, and her own lack of marriage prospects as that thirtieth birthday approached, Fanny had plenty to trouble her (and interest us, her audience of more than 200 years later) during the period covered by this book. If one sometimes wishes she would not record so many conversations verbatim, but just 'get on with it,' one returns to being thankful that she *did* spend so much of her precious time journalising, when there were so many other calls upon her, so many duties to fulfil.

As usual, the editorship of this volume is impeccable and hugely impressive. With sufficient leisure to read and do them justice, the footnotes

alone add immensely to our knowledge of eighteenth-century people and habits. The only fault I could find was that the Editor does not seem to know that the River Avon that flows through Bath is not the same River Avon known to Shakespeare: we have two. But I hate to end on a quibble, and I thoroughly recommend anyone who can afford it to add this volume to their Burney shelves. Perhaps we all have our favourite passages, not to mention personages, in the long and eventful narrative of Fanny Burney's life. Her time at Court, her romance and marriage, her sojourn in France, all are tremendously interesting. But for me, her relationship with Hester Thrale holds a particular fascination, and I am grateful for the opportunity to savour its progress here, under the most scholarly of expositions.

Maggie Lane is a founding member and Patron of the Burney Society and the Hon. Secretary of the Jane Austen Society. In addition to many books about Jane Austen, she is the author of A City of Palaces: Bath through the eyes of Fanny Burney, published by Millstream Books in 1999; and Literary Daughters, which includes a chapter about Burney's relationship with her father, published by Robert Hale, 1988. She has lectured on Jane Austen and Fanny Burney in Canada, Australia and the UK.

Contributions Welcome

The *Burney Letter* welcomes input from members. News, letters, stories or suggestions should be sent to Dr. Lorna Clark, Burney Centre, McGill University, 853 Sherbrooke Str. W., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3A 2T6 or by e-mail to llclarklj@aol.com

BOOK REVIEW

Textual Promiscuities: Eighteenth-Century Critical Rewriting by Antoinette Marie Sol. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press and London: Associated University Presses, 2002. Pp. 243. ISBN 0-8387-5500-3.

By Ellen Moody

Antoinette Marie Sol's *Textual Promiscuities* is an eye-opening book that merits the attention of readers of Burney's novels. She does not attempt to read these novels from a perspective drawn from Burney's life (60). She instead presents a persuasive picture of the single literary community on both sides of the channel and brings out how Burney's novels were influenced by, and played a formative role in, the development and function of the modern novel.

Sol's ultimate goal is to widen the literary terrain used to understand eighteenth-century novels to include novels by women and to move beyond single-language boundaries (203-4). It will be asked, Are not we doing this already? Sol outlines the history of scholarship on the literary sources of *Evelina* (60-64) and Choderlos de LaClos's *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (40-49) to demonstrate that we are not. Critics explain Burney's dramatizations of brutal violence and unkind comedy linked jarringly to women's vulnerability and powerlessness, as feminist farce, or enjoyable generic disjunctions whose literary origins are in Fielding, Smollett, and hard stage comedy (60-63). They marginalize women's novels; for example, one study places a group of novels, mostly by women (one of them Burney's *Cecilia*), in a footnote (38-39). The recipe for intertextual reconfigurations of LaClos is limited to Crébillon *films*, Rousseau and Richardson's novels (40-46). In Sol's book Burney is a major influence on LaClos.¹ Sol triangulates the novels of Burney, Marie-Jeanne Riccoboni and LaClos to disclose how they use analogous character types, situations, and motifs.² These

novelists show that social codes which defended as "guides, supports and protection for women" were repressive "attacks" on women, ways at once of training women to be vulnerable and punishing them if they did not "subjugate" themselves to these codes and other "unjust conventions" (67-68). In their novels (and those of other near contemporaries) "libertine and sentimental paradigms question social customs and issues centering on gender, authority and identity" (19-29). Sol argues that today's ongoing dismissal of women's novels as minor or unimportant began in the seventeenth century (29-35), and depends on a false separation of mid-eighteenth century realistic novels from later seventeenth-, and early eighteenth-century scandal chronicles, secret histories, male adventure stories, and feminine romances (34-36). The later novels and romances (strategically and obsessively relabeled by contemporary male novelists as histories, memoirs, or fictional biographies) are censored and sentimentalized permutations of the earlier novels and romances. They are also masculinist: the new epistolary works "propose models of female victimization" (32); the mid-century heroine is presented as wholly "dependent on her status as an object" (35).

Sol performs informative and refreshing intertextual close readings of *Evelina* with *My Lord Rivers* and *Juliette Catesby* (63-109); of *Les Liaisons dangereuses* with *Ernestine, le marquis de Cressy*, and *Fanni Butlerd* (129-58) in the context of LaClos and Riccoboni's correspondence about *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (112-26); and of *Evelina* and *Cecilia* with *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (164-90) in the context of LaClos's review of *Cecilia* (159-64). Sol enriches her analyses by also discussing Riccoboni's *Miss Jenny*, which was itself influenced by a French translation of Haywood's *Betsy Thoughtless* (61-63); and Riccoboni's popular conclusion to Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne* (126-29), where Riccoboni reframes the issues of Marivaux's novel through a perspective which enacts "solidarity with [the

heroine's] female friends" and "reclaims the female voice" (126).³

Sol demonstrates that Riccoboni and Burney mix violence, comedy, and sentimentality in order to scrutinize "conventions regulating social relations between genders" (86): the reader sees how women lose "social leverage" and how most individual private points of view fail to gain endorsement, especially when a man succeeds in unveiling in public encounters a woman's understanding of what happened when no one else was around (88, 96). Burney and Riccoboni dramatize how women become "silent" and "complicitous" "in the oppression of other women" (99). Sol's analysis of Riccoboni's use of Juliette Catesby's epistolary voice to reveal the self-serving nature of the hero's justification of his rape of a friend's socially inexperienced sister is aligned with Burney's epistolary presentation of *Evelina* as similarly ignorant, anxious and therefore justifiably fearful (86-88). At times Sol's analysis of LaClos and Burney relies too strongly on broad analogies between the social positions, fates and types of characters, but she did persuade this reader that *Les Liaisons dangereuses* shares the concerns and aesthetic techniques of *Evelina* and *Cecilia*: in particular, women's dependence on social ties; their lack of control over their money and bodies; their inability to resist mores hostile to their interest; and a use of subtle ethical and graphic pictorial language to delve psychic phenomena (164-65, 178-79). She credits Burney's heroines with more sexual desire and untrammelled agency than they have (168).⁴ Much of the persuasive power of her analyses of LaClos and Burney depends on the reader having accepted Riccoboni's texts as an intermediary (146-56): Riccoboni was repelled by LaClos's Madame de Merteuil because LaClos's conception denied "that a woman's sexuality [springs] from the engagement of her heart," and Burney's heroines are reticent variants on the Riccoboni type of heroine who is endangered by "society's hypocrisies and double sexual standard" (214n.16).

Sol's concluding argument is that after

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Evelina Burney's use of a third-person narrator, increasingly convoluted syntax and Latinized vocabulary, represents Burney's attempt to place her work in a "male intellectual tradition that functioned as a literary and stylistic authorization for her writing" (195). The result is a stance and style at odds with matter that continues to be feminocentric and trace an exemplary heroine's "path" as she attempts to follow "society's complicated strictures on women's behavior" (194-98). We are cut off from "direct access to the soul, a space for passionate discourse" and the weak weapon which epistolary communication seems to offer (186). Yet after much trauma the fate of Burney's heroes and heroines continues to conform to one of the two endings Nancy Miller identified in *The Heroine's Text*: they are integrated into society. In the other ending (exemplified by most of LaClos's and a few of Riccoboni's), the novelist's heroes and heroines remain alienated, survive through hypocrisy, or die (192).

Sol's book makes visible an intricate novelistic art practiced by Burney, Riccoboni and LaClos, one which allows for a "frank" yet "hidden" portrayal (125, 145) of "inaccessible ideals" (129) lost in everyday social betrayals and "games" (138) through which (when the need arises) the powerful and ruthless sacrifice women and vulnerable men to desire and ambition. She makes the work of these eighteenth-century novelists shed light on later novelists who "adhere" to the same originally "female tradition of

novel-writing" (58, 192), e.g. Jane Austen and Henry James on one side of the channel (198, 203-4) and Marcel Proust and a host of novelists well outside the reaches of the channel and the English-speaking and reading world. Sol's book is not just an attempt to do justice to Burney (though it does that) and to offer "a more complete vision of the aesthetics of the novel" (204), but it maintains a conversation about women's art and lives whose function today is as needed as ever.

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Notes

¹ The significant dates and translations are as follows: in 1779 *Evelina* was translated into French by Antoine-Gilbert Griffet de Labaume. In 1782 LaClos's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* was published (shortly before Burney's *Cecilia*). In 1784 LaClos's review of *Cecilia* appeared in the *Mercure de France*, the French translation of *Cecilia* was published in Neufchâtel, and *Dangerous Connections* was printed in London.

² The novels by Riccoboni that Sol

deals with are: 1757, *Lettres de Mistriss Fanni Butlerd* (translated 1766); 1758 *Histoire de M. le marquis de Cressy* (translated 1759, reprinted 1765, reissued as extracts 1782); 1759, *Lettres de Milady Juliette Catesby à Mylady Henriette Campley* (translated 1760 by Frances Brooke, reprinted 1764, 1769, 1780); 1764, *Histoire de Miss Jenny* (translated 1764); 1767, *Histoire d'Ernestine* (translated 1765, reprinted 1767, 1793); 1777, *Lettres de Mylord Rivers à Sir Charles Cardigan* (translated by Percival Stockdale 1768).

³ In 1754 *Betsy Thoughtless* was translated as *L'Étourdie, ou Histoire de Miss Betsy Tatless* [sic] by "le chevalier de Fleuriau;" from 1743 on as completed and Translated by Mary Mitchell Collyer, *The Virtuous Orphan, Or, the Life of Marianne Countess of **** reached the English public through Harrison's *Novelists' Magazine* and the circulating library.

⁴ Burney's married heroines (Cecilia and Juliette) remain virgins to the end of their books. Burney's heroines are variants on the repressive misogynist types found in English Restoration and eighteenth-century drama; see Pat Gill, *Interpreting Ladies: Women, Wit and Morality in the Restoration Comedy of Manners* (Athens: Georgia UP, 1994), 9-17. After *Cecilia* Burney was even more sensitive to the possible loss of reputation she might endure if she showed knowledge of sexuality precisely because she was married.

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