

# Burney Letter

Vol. 1 No. 1

The Burney Society

Spring 1995

## U.K. members to gather in June

The house that witnessed the first meeting of Frances Burney with her future husband, Gen. Alexandre d'Arbly, in 1793 will be the scene of the Burney Society's first meeting in Great Britain at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 11, at Juniper Hall, Mickleham, near Dorking, Surrey.

Featured speaker will be Karin Fernald, actress, writer and researcher, who lectures on Frances Burney for the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Society and for the National Portrait Gallery.

The house, now a field study center, is being made available

for the Burney Society's use by John Bebbington, warden and director of studies, Field Studies Council, Juniper Hall Field Centre.

The Burney Society, inaugurated in New Orleans, La. in November of 1994, includes members, officers and patrons from three countries - the United States, Great Britain and Canada.

Ms. Fernald will speak on the topic "Miss Burney, her Family and her Friends." The talk will include 50 colored slides, including paintings by Hogarth, Gainsborough, Zoffany, Reynolds, and Edward Burney.

As an actress, Ms. Fernald's stage and television appearances include Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* in London's Haymarket Theatre with Sir Ralph Richardson; *Measure for Measure* at Stratford, Ontario; Robert Morley's hippie girlfriend in *A Ghost on Tiptoe* at the Savoy Theater; Elizabeth Bennet in the bicentenary tour of *Pride and Prejudice*; Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*, Anne Forsyte in *The Forsyte Saga* and Ruth in *Blithe Spirit*.

A discussion among members will follow the presentation,

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## Burney Society meets on Oct. 5

A talk by Prof. Margaret Anne Doody of Vanderbilt University will highlight the second annual general meeting of the the Burney Society, scheduled to begin at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 5, at the Canterbury Inn in downtown Madison, Wisc.

The meeting will be held in the book-lined atrium of The Canterbury Inn, which is a combination independent bookstore/bed and breakfast inn in an historic building that was

restored in 1991 by its current owners.

After Prof. Doody's talk and a business meeting, members will be served a high tea in the bookshop's coffeehouse that will be substantial enough to serve as dinner for those who want to plan other activities in the evening.

Prof. Doody, who is also a Burney Society patron, is the author of a number of important works of criticism, includ-

ing *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works*; *A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson*, and *The Daring Muse: Augustan Poetry Reconsidered*, which won the Rose Mary Crawshay Prize awarded by the British Academy. She is editing new edition of Jane Austen's works and has written two novels of her own. She is Director of

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# Society launched in New Orleans

By Paula L. Stepankowsky

The Burney Society, which has as its purpose to promote the study and appreciation of the 18th-century novelist and diarist, her works and her times, was formally inaugurated in early November, 1994, in New Orleans, La., before the annual meeting of the Jane Austen Society of North America.

About 20 people representing the United States, Canada, and Great Britain attended the meeting and began organizing the society. Those present agreed to establish a newsletter, set dues (\$10 a year U.S. and £6 a year sterling) began assembling a patron list, set up a committee to write bylaws and seek non-profit status, and decide on our next annual meeting, which will be held Thursday, Oct. 5, in Madison, Wisc., before the 1995 Jane Austen Society of North America annual general meeting begins.

Burney Society members in Great Britain have planned a meeting at 2 p.m. June 11, at Juniper Hall, where Frances Burney first met the man who would become her husband. (See related stories in this newsletter about both meetings.)

Those at the inaugural meeting also agreed that as long-term goals, the society should see what it can do about restoring the Burney monument at Walcot Church, Bath, to its original position over the remains of the novelist and her son, if they can be found. The society also seeks to restore the monument itself, which is badly in need of cleaning. The other long-term goal is to investigate the possibility of a plaque honoring the novelist in Westminster Abbey.

Officers elected were Paula LaBeck Stepankowsky, Longview, Wash., president; Dr. Jacqueline Reid-Walsh of McGill University, Montreal, vice president of the society and vice president for Canada; Maggie Lane of Bristol, England, vice president for

Department, Dr. Janice Thaddeus of Harvard University; Ruth Iglehart, antiquarian book dealer; and Mary Margaret Benson of Linfield College in Oregon.

From Great Britain: Nigel Nicolson, former Member of Parliament, biographer and columnist; Susan McCartan, secretary of the British Jane Austen Society; Maggie Lane, author and lecturer; Jean Bowden, curator of Jane Austen's House; Charles Burney, head of the Burney family, and John Comyn, also a Burney family member.

The dues year is from June 13 to June 13, in honor of the novelist's birthday. Dues will include two issues of the newsletter, notices of upcoming meetings on a national, international and regional basis, and notice of any other activities. Once our finances allow, the society will launch an annual literary journal.

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Great Britain; Lucy Magruder of La Canada, Calif., as secretary/treasurer for North America and Jean Bowden of Selbourne, Hampshire, England as secretary/treasurer for Great Britain. Catalina Hannan of Rye, New York, will edit the newsletter.

We are honored that distinguished representatives from three countries have agreed to serve as patrons.

From Canada: Dr. Joyce Hemlow, Professor Emerita, McGill University, and Dr. Lars Troide, director of the Burney Project at McGill University.

From the United States: Dr. Margaret Anne Doody of Vanderbilt University; Dr. Rachel Brownstein of the State University of New York; Dr. Ruth Perry of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Conrad Harper, legal counsel to the U.S. State

## *Burney Letter*

The semiannual newsletter of the Burney Society, which includes members in Canada, Great Britain and the United States.

President: Paula L. Stepankowsky  
Editor.....Catalina Hannan

Address correspondence regarding newsletter articles to Catalina Hannan, 216 Purchase Street, Rye, N.Y. 10580, USA

Membership in The Burney Society is available for \$10 (U.S.) annually in the United States and Canada, and £6 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: Lucy Magruder, P.O. Box 1547, La Canada, Calif., 91012. In Great Britain, write Jean Bowden, Primrose Cottage, Gracious Street, Selborne, Alton, Hampshire, England, GU34 3JB.

# Next volume in series progresses

By Jacqueline Reid-Walsh

In addition to be a leading 18-century woman novelist, writing *Evelina* (1778), *Cecilia* (1782), *Camilla* (1796) and *The Wanderer* (1814), Frances Burney was a prolific journal writer.

In 1768, she began recording her observations and thoughts in her journal to "Miss Nobody," and maintained this habit throughout her life until her death in 1840 at the age of 87. Her observations are a "window" into the world of the latter half of the 18th century, and the first half of the 19th century, allowing readers to gain insight into the rich social and literary history of the period. These journals and letters comprise more than 10,000 manuscript pages. The main repositories are the Osborn Collection in the Beinecke Library at Yale University, the Berg collection in the New York Public Library, and the British Library. But there are holdings in libraries, archives and private collections world-wide.

The *Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney* is a projected 12-volume edition of Frances Burney's early journals and letters covering the years 1768-1791 under the editorship of Prof. Lars Troide of McGill University, Montreal, Quebec. At present, three volumes have been published: Volume I, 1768-1773, edited by Lars Troide; Volume II, 1774-1777, edited by Lars Troide; and Volume III, *The Streatham Years: Part I, 1778-1779*, co-edited by Lars Troide and Stewart Cooke.

Volumes four to seven are in progress. Prof. Betty Rizzo is editing Volume 4, which is

presently being vetted by Prof. Troide; Dr. Cooke is currently working on Volume 5, which will be co-edited with Prof. Troide; Volume 6 is being edited by John Abbott, while Olwen Hedley is going to edit Volume 7, *The Court Years*. It is not known when this massive undertaking will be complete, although Prof. Troide is hoping most would be complete by the end of this millennium.

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the 12-volume edition of *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame d'Arblay)*, 1791-1840, which was published under the editorship of Prof. Joyce Hemlow, Professor Emerita of McGill University. These volumes began to appear in 1972, with the final two volumes being published in 1984. Prof. Hemlow decided to focus on the latter half of Burney's life because the existing 19th-century editions, *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, by Mrs. Charlotte Barrett (Frances

Burney's niece) in the 1840s, and the *Early Diary* by Mrs. Annie Raine Ellis in 1889 both neglected the period after 1791.

Prof. Troide has focused on the early period because it had become apparent to Prof. Hemlow that there were 4,000 obliterated lines in the manuscripts of the earliest years, and that the edition covering the middle years was woefully incomplete. In addition to Frances Burney's subsequently cutting or deleting text, her niece had reconstructed letters "cutting and pasting" to form "new" letters out of old ones.

The first three volumes are co-published by McGill-Queens Press and Oxford University Press. In North America, they can be obtained from McGill-Queen's University Press, 3430 McTavish St. Montreal, Quebec, H3A 1X9, for \$70 each, both U.S. and Canadian.

Other exciting Burney research has been recently completed. *The Collected Plays of Frances Burney*, edited by Peter Sabor, Stewart Cooke and Geoffrey Sill, has just been published by Pickering & Chatto in London. This volume was published on March 21, 1995, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the production of her play *Edwy and Elgiva*, the only play by Frances Burney to be produced in her lifetime.

*Dr. Jacqueline Reid-Walsh, who teaches at McGill University, is Burney Society vice president and vice president for Canada.*

## BURNEY SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

To become a member of the Burney Society, please fill out the following form and return it with your check by June 13, 1995, for the 1995-1996 dues year, which runs from June 13 to June 13. Those who live in the U.S. and Canada should send a check for \$10 U.S. payable to \*Lucy Magruder to: Burney Society, c/o Lucy Magruder, Secretary/Treasurer, P.O. Box 1547, La Canada, Calif., 91012, USA. Those who live in Great Britain should send a check for £6 payable to The Burney Society to: Jean Bowden, Primrose Cottage, Gracious Street, Selborne, Alton, Hampshire, England, GU34 3JB.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province/County \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

\* Once the Burney Society is incorporated as a non-profit organization in the United States, which we expect to happen later this year, we will qualify to have a bank account in the society's name without incurring additional service charges. Until then, dues checks for North American members should be made out to Lucy Magruder, the society's secretary/treasurer.

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## Society wants members to submit ideas

**By Catalina Hannan**

The premiere issue of a newsletter is always an exciting event.

The premiere newsletter of a new society is an even more exciting event.

The editorial staff has many ideas for the contents of this newsletter, including updates on the progress and future activities of the society, current Frances Burney research projects and the efforts concerning her grave at Walcot Church and

the plaque in Westminster Abbey.

In fact, we were pleased to have an abundance of topics, and we have, therefore, built a little reserve for future issues.

But we would also like to encourage members to write articles and submit items of interest, such as special or unusual mentions of Frances Burney in books or newspaper and magazine clippings. Suggestions for future features would also be welcome.

I am not, unfortunately, "electronically accessible" at the

moment (unless one counts the fax machine) and must, therefore, request that items be sent to me either on 3.5" DS, HD disc (using Word Perfect for Windows 6.1 or any compatible program) or in typewritten form.

Please send anything using the U.S. Postal Service by first class mail to me at 216 Purchase St., Rye, New York, 10580. If you would prefer to fax material to me, you may do so, Monday through Friday, at (212) 968-3437.

## Society seeks non-profit status by end of 1995

At the founding dinner of the Burney Society in New Orleans in November, members encouraged the newly elected officers to look into non-profit status for our new organization.

The first step towards formal organization and application for non-profit status in the United States is the creation of a founding document. A sub-committee is working on that, and several drafts of bylaws have already been reviewed. A draft is now ready to circulate among the officers for final approval.

In order to have the best chance of acceptance by state and federal governments, we are keeping bylaws simple since we are currently a small organization with only one formal meeting a year. However, we are allowing for growth.

Application for non-profit status in Canada and Great Britain, spearheaded by Burney Society members in those countries, may be done in the future as more members join the society.

As soon as the bylaws are signed, the formal application for U.S. federal non-profit status will be filed. We expect that to be within the next few months, allowing time for the bylaws to be sent back and forth across the Atlantic and continental North America.

Non-profit status will allow the Burney Society to offer donors a tax deduction on contributions to the society. It will also exempt the society from taxes on savings and investments (when we have some), as well as keep bank administrative fees to a minimum.

## Burney plaque planned in Bath

The tomb erected over the grave of Frances Burney and her son by the Burney family at St. Swithin's Church, Bath, was relocated in 1955.

The tomb, now in an enclosure to the left of the church, replaced the original stone that was erected in 1840 over her grave near the Mortuary Chapel in the lower graveyard. The gravestone of Rev. George Austen, father of Jane Austen, also lies in the enclosure.

The Jane Austen Society of Great Britain has begun an effort to restore Rev. Austen's tombstone and mark it with a plaque. The Jane Austen Society has offered to include a small plaque with a mention of the nearby Burney monument.

Susan McCartan, JAS secretary and Burney Society patron said the tomb restoration and plaque installation may be done sometime this year.

## Other activities planned in U.K.

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including a session on how to publicize the society and attract more members. Tea will be served in the garden if the weather is fine.

Tickets are £5 each, including tea, and can be obtained by writing to Jean Bowden, Primrose Cottage, Gracious Street, Selborne, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 3JB, England. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

In other news from Great Britain, Burney Society members have received a message of support from the Johnson Society at the Johnson Birthplace Museum, Lichfield,

wishing the society well and promising to tell its members about the society.

Jane Austen Society members in Great Britain were treated to a talk on both Jane Austen and Frances Burney on May 14 at a meeting of the Bath and Bristol Branch of the Jane Austen Society held at Clifton Hill House, Clifton, Bristol.

Prof. Judy Simons, of Sheffield Hallam University and author of *Fanny Burney* in the Macmillan Women Writers series, gave a talk entitled "Jane Austen, Fanny Burney and 'Female Difficulties'." Prof. Simons has also written Macmillan Masterguides to *Sense and Sensibility* and *Persuasion*.

In her talk, Prof. Simons discussed the shared concerns and differing approaches of the two novelists as their work evolved.

Those living in England or visiting there this summer will be able to see Ms. Fernald perform a musical program based on Frances Burney.

The program, entitled "Music and Masquerades," based on Frances Burney's journals, will be held at Kenwood House, Hampstead Lane, Hampstead London NW3, at 7:30 p.m. July 20. Ms. Fernald will be accompanied in the program by David Jackson.

Tickets, from £12.50, may be obtained by phoning the Kenwood House box office at 081-348-1286.

# Meeting to be in historic building

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Comparative Literature at Vanderbilt University.

The Canterbury Inn and Canterbury Booksellers is located at 315 W. Gorham at St. Street, Madison, Wisc., 53703, 1-800-838-3850. It is a few blocks from the Madison Concourse Hotel, which is the location for the 1995 annual general meeting of the Jane Austen Society of North America, which will be held Oct. 6 through Oct. 8.

As part of the meeting arrangement, Canterbury Booksellers owners have promised to stock up on books by and relating to Frances Burney and her time. The atrium area of the bookshop and the coffeehouse will be available to members for the meeting and visiting afterwards

until about 6:30 p.m.

More specific details about the October meeting, including registration information, will be available in late summer, when the next edition of the *Burney Letter* is published. Although a final meeting price hasn't yet been set, organizers believe that it will be about \$15 per person, including the meal, gratuity, meeting room and materials. We will try to keep the price as reasonable as possible, yet arrange a meeting that will do justice to Frances Burney.

The Canterbury Inn takes full advantage of its name to decorate its rooms in a way that would not be unfamiliar to Chaucer himself.

The bookstore and coffeehouse on the main floor are filled with a variety of books on all topics. The six bed and breakfast rooms upstairs are

painted, furnished and named for a traveler to Canterbury in the Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Travelers whose tales are depicted include the Clerk, Reeve, Knight, Miller, Wife of Bath and Merchant.

The building that houses the Canterbury Inn was built as the Jacobson Building in 1924. It had fallen on hard times when the current owners bought it and restored it in 1991. Recently, the restoration was recognized by the Madison Trust and the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation. The restoration effort also received the 1992 Capital community Citizens Orchid award.

Anyone with questions thus far about the meeting should write or call Lucy Magruder, Burney Society secretary/treasurer, P.O. Box 1547, La Canada, Calif., 91012, 818-790-9178.

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## Return address

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**MADISON REGISTRATION INFORMATION IN NEXT ISSUE**

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