

Burney Letter

Vol. 1 No. 2

The Burney Society

Fall 1995

Doody Talk Will Highlight Meeting

A talk, entitled Frances Burney: Diarist, Dramatist, and Novelist, presented by Professor Margaret Anne Doody of Vanderbilt University will highlight the second annual general meeting of The Burney Society, scheduled to begin at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 5, at the Canterbury Inn in downtown Madison, Wisconsin.

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

Cost for the meeting is \$15 per person, including tax and tip. The menu will include quiche with fruit and Wisconsin cheeses, scones with butter and jam, desert and tea. Those who plan to attend should fill out the registration form included in this issue of the newsletter and send it, along with their check, to Lucy Magruder by September 22.

In the inaugural talk of the Society, Professor Doody will discuss Burney's work in general with a particular focus on her role as a dramatist. Professor Doody, who is also a Burney Society patron, is the author of a number of important works of criticism, including *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 a new edition of Jane Austen's works and has written two novels of her own. She is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and Director of Comparative Literature at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Among the items scheduled for the business meeting are a report on efforts to establish non-profit status for the Society, membership and Treasurers' reports, a report from the British Secretary/Treasurer, discussion of a literary journal, a report on a membership brochure, discussion of a Westminster Abbey plaque and discussion of efforts to restore the Burney grave at Walcot Church in Bath.

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

As part of the meeting arrangement, the 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..

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 Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Travelers whose tales are depicted include the Clerk, the Reeve, the Knight, the Miller, the Wife of Bath and the Merchant.

Anyone with questions about the meeting or who would like to submit items for the business part of the agenda should write or call Paula Stepankowsky, Burney Society President, 1407 24th Avenue, Longview, WA 98632, (360) 636-3763 before September 22.

1995 MADISON BURNEY SOCIETY REGISTRATION FORM

To register for the October 5 meeting of The Burney Society, beginning at 3:30 p.m., at the Canterbury Inn in downtown Madison, please fill out the following form and return it with your \$15 (U.S.) check made out to *LUCY MAGRUDER no later than September 22. The check should be sent to Lucy Magruder, Secretary/Treasurer, The Burney Society, P.O. Box 784, Green Valley, AZ 85622, U.S.A.. (This is a temporary address for Lucy.)

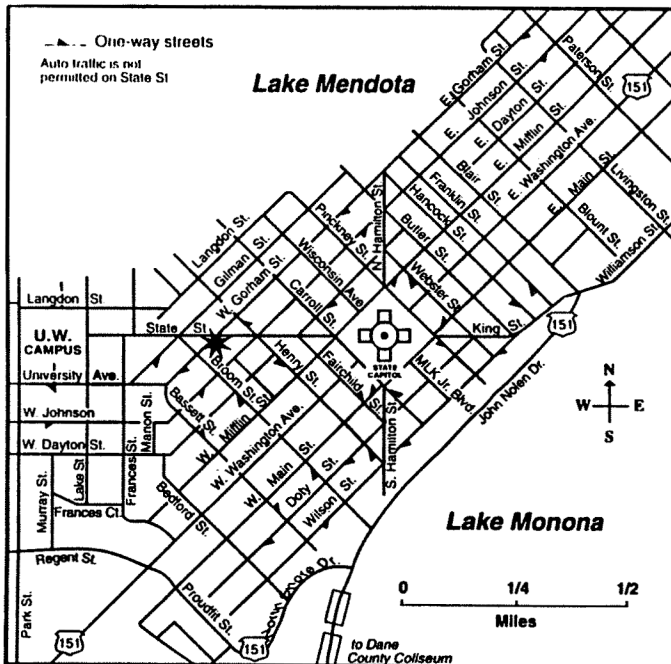
NAME _____

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*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, registration checks for North American members should be made out to Lucy Magruder, the Society's Secretary/Treasurer.



Map courtesy of Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau

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.

British Members Gather at Juniper Hall

By Jean Bowden

Our meeting began with a warm welcome to all members and potential members present, extended by Jean Bowden, a Patron and Member-at-Large, on behalf of the President of the Burney Society, Paula Stepankowsky, and Lucy Magruder, our co-ordinator in the United States of America.

We were delighted that the Burney Society's Vice-President, Maggie Lane, and Patrons Susan McCartan and Nigel Nicolson were able to be present, and that three members of the Burney family honoured us with their presence - John Comyn, his wife Cynthia Comyn and their cousin Elizabeth (Burney) Parker. John Comyn is a direct descendant of Fanny Burney's brother Charles, and Elizabeth Parker is sister to Charles Burney, the present head of the Burney family.

A special welcome was extended to Sallie Wadsworth, who was visiting England from Indiana in the United States. We were very pleased to have a member from the other side of the Atlantic present.

A message was read out from Charles Burney, the present head of the Burney family, wishing the new Burney Society every success, and ending his letter: "One small point: I remain incorrigibly traditional in calling my great-great-great Aunt Fanny Burney!"

We then heard a fascinating talk entitled "Fanny Burney, her Family and her Friends" given by Karin Fernald, a talented actress who lectures on Fanny Burney for Fine Arts Societies, and at the National Portrait Gallery in London. Karin illustrated her talk with colour transparencies of portraits of many of the people she discussed. Her talk covered the time from Fanny's birth in 1752 until she met her future husband General d'Arblay at Juniper Hall in 1793.

We then adjourned for tea, and were shown the very room where their life-long devotion to each other began.

In the business meeting that followed, a report was given on the present state of membership of the Burney Society both in Britain and in North America. Up to the end of May 1995, the membership in Britain stood at 21 paid-up members and 18 people showing a serious interest. In Canada and the United States there were at that time 48 paid -up members and 25 interested.

Letters between Charles Burney and the Reverend Canon Harvey, Sub-Dean of Westminster Abbey, were then read out, on the subject of the correct way to proceed in order to obtain permission to have a memorial plaque to honour Fanny Burney erected in the Abbey.

Karin Fernald had very kindly arranged with the National Portrait Gallery in London for permission to use its portrait of Fanny Burney (the one where she is wearing a huge hat) for publicity purposes. Since the meeting Jean Bowden has obtained a suitable black and white print of it, and the brochures will be printed in the United States. We have permission to produce only 1000 brochures with it. John Comyn generously offered the Burney Society the use of his own portrait of Fanny Burney when we need more brochures.

Elizabeth Parker recommended Professor Judy Simons' book on Fanny Burney to the meeting, and as Professor Simons was present she was immediately asked if she would give the talk at our

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next meeting, which she very graciously agreed to do. It is hoped to hold the next meeting on June 9, 1996 at Juniper Hall at 2 pm.

Jean Bowden was then thanked for her efforts on behalf of the Burney Society, and the meeting was closed. Some members bravely made their way through pouring rain to visit the nearby church at Mickleham, led by Elizabeth Watson who lives in that village. Fanny Burney and General d'Arblay were married in that church.

We feel that a good start has been made over on the eastern side of the Atlantic, the great ocean which physically divides our membership but which cannot divide us in our aim to further interest in Fanny Burney.

Brochures, More Publicity on Tap

As word of The Burney Society spreads, more people are joining from the United States, Canada and Great Britain.

As of mid-August, the Society had 52 paid members in the United States and Canada and 19 paid members in Great Britain.

The Society is working to develop a formal membership brochure illustrated with the portrait of Burney that hangs in the National Gallery in London. Permission to use the portrait was obtained by Jean Bowden, Secretary/Treasurer of the Society for Great Britain. She was also able to obtain the reprint permission at a rate much less than the usual price per 1,000 copies.

Printing of the formal brochure will take place after non-profit status for the Society is achieved in the United States. That way we can include in the brochure information about where to send tax-deductible donations.

In the meantime, we are developing a one-page flyer with membership information that we will have available at the October 5 meeting in Madison. If members would like extra copies to circulate they should contact Paula Stepankowsky at 1407 24th Avenue, Longview, WA 98632, USA, (360) 636-3763.

Anyone with additional ideas about publicizing the Society in the United States, Canada or Great Britain, or who would like to help do so, should contact Paula Stepankowsky at the above address and telephone number.

Fanny Burney Returns to Kenwood

By Kate Chisholm

On a balmy summer's evening in London, Fanny Burney was brought back to Kenwood House when a group of actors and musicians enacted extracts from her journals linked by the music of Haydn, C.P.E. Bach and Dussek.

It was as if we had been taken back 200-odd years to that untidy but homely drawing-room in St Martin's Street (the Burneys lived in Sir Isaac Newton's old house behind Trafalgar Square) where Hetty and her cousin Charles entertained the company at the harpsichord, while Fanny sat on the sidelines peering shortsightedly at everyone but listening intently to all that was going on. Dr. Johnson hovered at her side.

In June 1792, Fanny had recorded in her journal for Friday the 22nd that, 'We went to Cane Wood to see the House & Pictures'. Typically, her most interesting comments on that day have nothing to do with the elegant home built by the Earl of Mansfield on the edge of what is now Hampstead Heath, but concern his lordship himself. So we have no mention of his collection of society portraits; instead we are treated to a description of the Earl's reluctance to go out.

The evening of *Music and Masquerades* at Kenwood was devised by Karin Fernald (who has toured the world with a one-woman show about Fanny Burney) and included all those favourite set-pieces - the arrival in St Martin's Street of Prince Orloff, who was rumoured to have assassinated the Tsar; the performance of the temperamental Italian soprano Signora Agujari; and, best of all, the masquerade where Fanny dances with her 'Dutchman'.

We heard, for instance, of that 'pink persian Vest', which Fanny wore to the masked ball held by the Lalauzes of nearby Leicester Square in January 1770. The passage is worth quoting in full (from Lars Troide's edition of *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1988, p100) because it is unusual for Fanny to give us so much information about a mere dress. Even in the Court Journals, we hear little of those bejeweled gowns and furbelows Fanny must have worn on the Royal birthdays. No wonder (if she was indeed so uninterested in fashion) that she was bored and fed up while waiting on Queen Charlotte as Second Keeper of the Robes.

But in 1770, Fanny was just 17, and she describes her dress with all the breathy enthusiasm of a teenager in her first really grown-up outfit. It had, she writes, 'long close sleeves, to my Wrists, it was covered with Gause, in loose pleats behind, & drawn half tight & half loose at the sleeve, puckered before, with very small pink Flowers fastened on to look like buttons; it came up high in the Neck, & had a Gause frill round the Waist. My Coat was white silk trimed also with small artificial flowers before, & a Gause train looped up behind, & pink ribband round the Bottom. I had pink silk shoes & Roses, a very small black color [collar] about my neck, a little Garland or Wreath of Flow[e]rs on the left side of my Head, & looped Pearl Earings.'

Karin Fernald herself took on the persona of Fanny - with her saucy asides, and her gift for capturing a person in a brief word or two. For where Fanny excels - and why, surely, she is still such a popular writer - is in bringing to vivid life the atmosphere of those society drawing-rooms,

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and the characters who inhabited them. As you read her diaries, it is as if you are there, listening in on their conversations.

So, in the elegant 18th-century Orangery at Kenwood, we saw Dr Johnson (as played by television actor David Jackson) poking 'his nose over the Harpsichord, till the Duet was finished' and annoying the company by spending his time poring over the books on Dr Burney's shelves - 'We were very much provoked, as we perfectly languished to hear him talk' (*ibid*, vol II, p 225).

Next minute, Prince Orloff saunters into the room: 'a handsome & magnificent Figure. His Dress was very superb. Besides a Blue Garter, he had a star of Diamonds, of prodigious brilliancy; he had likewise a *shoulder knot* of the same *precious Jewels*, & a Picture of the Empress Hung from his Neck, which was set round with Diamonds of such magnitude & lustre that, when near the Candle, they were too dazzling for the eye...He was extremely gracious & polite, & appeared to be *addicted to pleasantry*...'

Fanny continues, 'I felt myself so *Dwarfish* by his *high Highness*, that I could not forbear whispering Mr Chamier, "Lord, how I hate those enormous Tall men!...I only *hated* them, because they made *me*, & such *as* me look so very insignificant.' (*ibid*, p181). How often have we felt like that!

Meanwhile, a haughty Signora Agujari (Ruth Gomme, a post-graduate student at the Royal Academy of Music) was persuaded to entertain us with some ravishing music from Haydn's *Arianna a Naxos*, and songs by James Hook and Venanzio Rauzzini. (She was accompanied at the harpsichord by Geoffrey Govier, a specialist in 18th-century music.) All in all, a feast of music and Burneyana, which drove me straight back to those *Early Journals*.

Kate Chisholm is writing a biography of Frances Burney which is due for publication in 1997

Bylaws and Non-Profit Update

The first step towards formal organization and application for non-profit status in the United States for The Burney Society is underway.

A subcommittee, headed by Burney Society Secretary/Treasurer Lucy Magruder, developed a set of bylaws based on a pattern established by other literary societies and accepted by the Internal Revenue Service.

In order to have the best chance of acceptance by state and federal governments, we are keeping the bylaws simple since we are currently a small organization with only one formal meeting in this country each 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.

The draft was circulated among Burney Society officers for approval and the final draft is now being sent to officers in the United States, Canada and Great Britain for signature.

Non-profit status will allow the Burney Society to offer donors a tax deduction on contributions to the Society which will be used for such projects as establishing a literary journal and funding a plaque to Frances Burney in Westminster Abbey.

Non-profit status 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 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 _____

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Complete Set of Plays Published

A first-ever edition of all of the plays by Frances Burney, edited by Peter Sabor of Queen's University in Canada, has been published in London by Pickering & Chatto.

The two volume set includes text set from the original manuscripts, a general introduction, headnotes to each play, explanatory notes and variant readings. The set includes such plays as *The Witlings* and *A Busy Day*.

The set is priced at £120 and is available by writing Pickering & Chatto (Publishers) Ltd., 21 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2TH, England.

Novelist Remembered in Rose

Frances Burney d'Arblay is remembered not only for her four novels and her diaries and letters, but also for a rose named after her.

Burney Society members who also love roses may be interested to know that the Mme. d'Arblay rose, first introduced in 1835, can be had for their own gardens from a rose grower in England.

The rose, which is a rambler, has this catalog description: Cascading clusters of small, cupped flowers of blush pink to white. Scented and very vigorous. The rose is also shade tolerant, can grow in poorer soils and is summer flowering.

It sells for £7.95 and is available from Peter Beales Roses, London Road, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1AY, England; telephone 01953-454707; fax 01953-456845. People who order from the United States and Canada should note that the company requires a minimum order of £25 for export. The company will send a catalog on request.

Roses imported into the United States are also subject to quarantine for a period of time so the company advises that American orders be sent via airmail.

Return address

IN NORTH AMERICA:

THE BURNEY SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1547

LA CANADA, CALIF., 91012 USA

IN GREAT BRITAIN:

THE BURNEY SOCIETY

PRIMROSE COTTAGE

GRACIOUS STREET

SELBORNE, ALTON

HAMPSHIRE, ENGLAND, GU34

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Spring issue article submission deadline is January 1, 1996
