

Jane Austen: Romance Novelist?

Jane Austen Society of Australia

Day Conference

16 May 2026

Epping Club

45-47 Rawson St

Epping, NSW



Speakers

Inger Brodey is a professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She is a scholar, public humanist and author. Her book *Jane Austen and the Price of Happiness* was published in 2024 and is the first full-length study that explores Austen's endings to her novels.

Carrie Kablean is a London-born, Sydney resident writer and editor, whose love for Jane Austen began during her schooldays and culminated in a homage, her first novel, *What Kitty Did Next*, which centres on Catherine Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*.

David Campbell OAM is one of Australia's most popular entertainers: a singer, actor, TV personality and radio host. **Lisa Campbell** is an award-winning casting director and theatre producer. Lisa is a lifelong Jane Austen fan, while David only recently picked up *Pride and Prejudice* for the first time. In 2025, they launched the podcast *Into the Austenverse*, which dives into the world of Austen novels, adaptations, reimaginings and cultural references. It blends pop culture, literature and the unique rhythms of their enduring marriage, with plenty of wit along the way.



Jane Caro AM is a best-selling novelist, Walkley award winning columnist and in-demand speaker. She has a BA in English Literature majoring in the Victorian social novel. She is a feminist and public education activist.

Steve Rohan-Jones is an engaging presenter and has recently delivered papers for international conferences, workshops and seminars, including the use of letters within Jane Austen, as far afield as Portugal, Sweden, Italy, Brisbane and Adelaide. A current PhD student at the University of Queensland, Steve is exploring the intersection between love and war within Shakespeare's history plays.

Scarlett Hopper is the author of seven romance novels and the founder of Sydney's first romance bookstore, *Romancing the Novel*. Her love of reading goes back to her childhood, when her sister introduced her to the words of Sylvia Plath and Virginia Woolf. Her bookstore stands as a sanctuary for romance readers, offering not only stories of love, but a shared space for connection, belonging, and community.

JASA acknowledges the Wallumedegal people of the Dharug nation, traditional custodians of the land on which this conference is taking place



Programme

- 10 – 10.15am **Welcome**
- 10.15 – 11.15am **‘Who can be in doubt of what followed?’:
Austen’s Anti-Romantic Lessons for her Readers**
Inger Brodey
- 11.15 – 11.45am **Morning Tea**
- 11.45 – 12.45pm **A Guide to Romance from:**
- **Mr Collins**
Carrie Kablean
- **Marianne Dashwood and Henry Tilney**
Lisa and David Campbell
- 12.45 – 1.15pm ***Persuasion*: A Mature-age Romance**
Jane Caro
- 1.15 – 2.15pm **Lunch**
- 2.15 – 2.45pm **Love or Thunder: The Intersection of Passion
and Intimacy in the Austenverse**
Steve Rohan-Jones
- 2.45 – 3.15pm. **Austen’s Endings on Film**
Inger Brodey
- 3.15 – 3.45pm **Romancing the Novel: Exploring Contemporary
Love Stories**
Scarlett Hopper
- 3.45 – 4pm **Conclusion and Thanks**

