

Paraphernalia for the Regency Man

Going beyond hat and gloves for the serious re-enactor

BY BRIAN CUSHING

While modern eyes view the Regency man as elegant and refined, contemporary conservative eyes looking on him would have perceived him as anything but. The wardrobe of some dandies like Beau Brummel were plain and rooted in those requiring something more utilitarian and less ornamental than the dress of the previous generation (Figure 1). By the end of the 18th century, the most apparent of these changes in men's wear was the replacement of breeches for trousers.



Fig. 1: Portrait of Lord Grantham, by Ingres, 1816

Previously, trousers had been relegated to physical labor. During the Regency they were stylized and became a trend for the upper classes. Boots, formerly reserved for work or riding, succeeded the buckled shoes and stockings for dress. The coat was a drab, plain wool, contrasting starkly with the opulence projected by the fabric of Georgian dress.



Fig. 2: Partridge Shooting near Windsor, by Robert Havell, Jr.

Three main factors may have contributed to this radical departure from the styles of the previous generation. One, pointed out by Norah Waugh in her classic work, *The Cut of Men's Clothes: 1600-1900*, was that, "the English nobility spent a great part of the year on their country estates or visiting other country estates; always interested in sport . . ." (p. 53). The desirability of country and sporting activities transformed Regency men's fashion. An external factor may have been the French Revolution, where displays of opulence could literally be deadly. And finally, there is the tendency of one generation to use fashion as a tool of rebelling against the previous generation. Regency fashion was a departure and contrast to what the Georgian's considered "appropriate" dress.

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Regency Paraphernalia, *continued from page 1*

During the Regency, men were concerned with being manly. If we look to accessories beyond the hat and gloves, we need to include those items that convey the impression of the country gentleman. Sporting was certainly on the minds of these men, and none so prevalent as the rural sport of the hunt. An obvious choice for accessories when recreating the Regency country gentleman are period correct firearms and their accoutrements.



Fig 3: Flintlock pistol, 19th c., wooden stock inlaid with silver and steel barrel. Huntington Museum of Art, Huntington, WV.

As the Regency Era preceded the percussion (“cap and ball”) system, a flintlock fowler for sporting or a pistol for ready defense are typical of this era. There are many special tools associated with the maintenance and use of flintlock arms which provide both additional “accessories” and a ready demonstration if you are in a position to interact with the public. Just be sure your hunting bag is worthy of an English gentleman and not suited only to the American frontier. His best work does not appear on the website but Greg Hudson always has outstanding hunting and game bags in stock and he does custom work: <http://www.revwarssupplier.com/>

For the gambling man, a Regency gent need not resort to modern equivalents. Figure 4 depicts the gear I keep with me.

Correct playing cards can be obtained from Jas Townsend and Son (<http://www.jas-townsend.com/>). The fish tiles, similar to those used as gambling tokens at the time, are available from Taylor Rose Historical Outfitters (<http://www.taylor-rosehistorical.com/>). The replica coins were a generous gift from a friend.



Fig 4: Reproduction playing cards, fish tiles, and replica coins.



Fig 5: Desk accessories for the Regency gentleman.

When recreating a gentleman of the past, any portion of the material culture that was a part of his day-to-day life is a potential accessory for your portrayal. One activity that was very present in Regency men’s lives was writing: without telephones or email, all correspondence was written and mailed. The articles for writing provide accessories, the process provides a demonstration, and, if you can find a Regency “pen pal” or two, your correspondence will become further items that you can utilize when recreating the Regency era.

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Galas Around the Bay

BY GEORGE MCQUARY

A certain contingent of GBACG enjoys invading the fund-raising galas around the SF Bay in costume. Here are the ones that I currently know about:

Summer Cocktail Soiree

de Young Museum, June 7, 2014

VIP tickets are over \$100, regular tickets are under \$100. Either way you'll be able to guzzle and nibble non-stop like on a cruise ship—all drinks and food are comped. And you get to party in a museum after hours, Bruce Wayne style. The crowd is mostly Marina district, and seems to ignore the gallery and the paintings for the booze and snacks. (Entirely understandable given that tired old Roy Lichtenstein looks to be the best of this particular show). The late night DJs are always ear splittingly too damn loud; so either save your quiet gallery tour for later when this happens, or spring for the VIP lounge, which sometimes is quiet, sometimes is not. All is redeemed because they've decided to go Mad Men era office wear for costume for this event. The lookout tower is sometimes included in the after-hours party. When it is, hit it early; it often closes at sunset.

Costume suggestions: Mad Men office wear.

Interest: High

Tickets: <http://www.artpoint.org/portfolios/artpoints-summer-cocktail-soiree-june-7-2014/> (discount for deYoung Artpoint members) with usually a late promotion coming up on <http://www.giltcity.com> if there are tickets still available.

July 4th Ice Cream Social

Pardee Museum, 672 Eleventh St., Oakland

This little 4th of July ice cream afternoon social has been attracting a good amount of the Art Deco society the last couple years, you'll recognize a lot of the crowd there.

Costume suggestions: 1860-1920s day wear or picnic wear—it was a farm, not a speakeasy. Comfortable shoes if you want the house tour up to the top lookout turret. Can be warm.

Interest: Medium. Nice if you're nearby, but not worth a long drive. Some people do a trifecta of cruising on the [USS Potomac](#), noshing at the Pardee Museum, then the [Hornet Museum](#) at night to see fireworks around the bay. I think that's too much work for my holiday off.

Tickets: <http://www.pardeehome.org/> but nothing listed as of publication.

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Upcoming Events

GBACG Goes to BAERS: Mansfield Park Ball

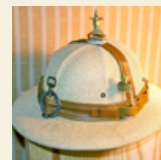
May 31, 2014



The Bay Area English Regency Society's Ball celebrates the Bicentennial of publication of *Mansfield Park*. Join us in dancing like Jane Austen. Costume: 1800-1825. Location: Kensington. \$\$

Costume Salon: Steampunk/Safari

June 1, 2014



Join us for potluck tea snacks, socializing, and sharing resources.

Theme appropriate books, patterns, garments, or projects also welcome. Salons are free and no costume is required. Location: Oakland.

costumesalons@gbacg.org

Tea at Pemberley

June 8, 2014

Join Lizzy Bennet, more properly known as Mrs. Fitzwilliam Darcy, for tea at the charming Darstealing Lounge. Location: San Francisco. \$\$\$\$



GBACG Lecture Series: 18th c. Hair

June 29, 2014

Come to our inaugural lecture! Kendra van Cleave, author of the new book, *18th Century Hair and Wig Styling*, will discuss fashionable hairstyles for men and women from 1700-1799. Location: Alameda. <http://gbacg.org/current/18th-century-hair-lecture.php>.



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Regency Paraphernalia, *continued from page 2*

George Bickham's *Penmanship Made Easy* is invaluable in familiarizing with variances in writing style at the time. The stoneware ink well was made by historic potter Jay Henderson (<http://artifacts.brigandsfolie.com/>). My quill was cured and cut by a friend, and is the necessary tool for writing. A stick of sealing wax is commonly available from wedding suppliers and stationers. The antique stylus, and some inexpensive marble covered journals/notebooks are from Regency Revisited (<http://www.regencyrevisited.com/>). This letter (Figure #) was sent to me by Albert "The Doctor" Roberts (<http://regencydoctor.blogspot.com/p/about-me.html>) who introduced me to recreating period correspondence.

Reading was another popular pass time. It is still possible to find books from the early 19th century that are in good enough shape to carry around if the event you are attending is not strenuous. Sometimes, reproduced books are available. One of mine is holding up well for a publication date of 1848 (Figure 6). Also available are reproduced periodicals. Figure 7 shows examples of 1811 news papers from Taylor Rose Historical Outfitters (<http://www.taylor-rosehistorical.com/>).



Fig 6: Book from mid-19th c.

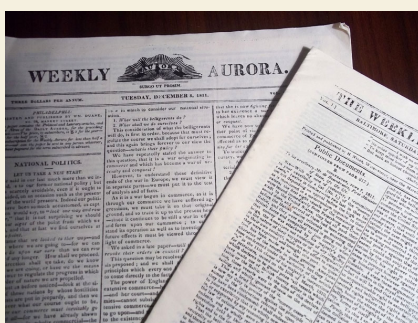


Fig 7: Reproduced newspapers.

or simply something to keep yourself hydrated, storing the liquid in one of the varieties of reproduced, hand blown bottles out there will aid your impression (Figure 8).

It is often the commonest articles of every day life from the past that will make you feel and appear to be connected to the period you are portraying. There are many wonderful items that are reproduced and ready for your purchase, but do not be afraid to jump into learning to recreate items from the Regency era yourself. The common walking stick can be carved or built. While often forgotten by today's society, the crafts of the past are often still alive in living history niches, and often by enthusiastic artisans ready to talk and lend advice to beginning re-enactors. One way or the other, the key to accessorizing for the past is in the lives and habits of those who lived it. *F*



Fig 5: Correspondence to the author.

And, of course, the necessary function of day to day life can be opportunities to incorporate items to make your impression more authentic. Large (to the modern eye) mechanical pocket watches were used to tell time. They were suspended from fobs that hung on the outside of the trousers, the inspiration for which can be found in some period portraits. Chances are, you will be taking a drink before the end of the day, and whether it is in the form of port, the preferred tippie of the Prince Regent,

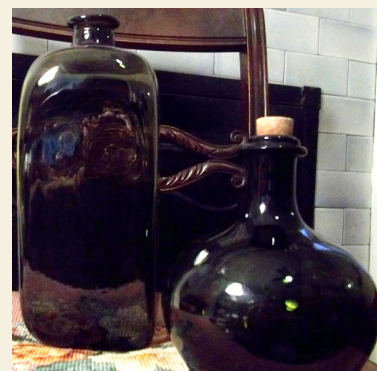
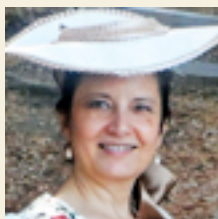


Fig 8: Reproduced bottles.



President's Column

BY DEBORAH BORLASE

Something new that we are starting this year is a Lecture series. We are thrilled about this, and cannot wait for our first lecture coming up in June! We are honored to have our very own Kendra Van Cleeve, who has been working steadily through the

years to become an expert in 18th c. history, and has dedicated several years of service in this guild. Please be certain to mark your calendars for Sunday June 29, and join us for this fun (and educational) event!

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An Intimate Evening at Dunsmuir-Hellman Estate

July 26, 2014, Oakland

“[Diner en Blanc](#)” has been a pop-up dinner party running in Paris (and now all over the world) for 25 years, where people dress head-to-toe in white outfits, eat at tables draped in white cloth, and drink champagne. This is the Paris concept, but brought into the East Bay at the same site as the Gatsby Summer Afternoon. The Art Deco society has been slowly invading to give it a bit more class. Food and noshes are comped as part of entry, but the booze isn't top shelf – expect screw top wine, not [Vintners Market](#) special reserves. Sometimes the horse driven Cinderella Carriage is also present, which is a hoot.

Costume: All White Attire. You can go any time, any period, even the future or fantasy. Or just borrow someone's bocce ball club outfit.

Interest: High.

Tickets: <http://dunsmuir-hellman.com/an-intimate-evening/>

Given the loud music at some of these venues, my favorite accessory is Etymotic Hearing Protection Earplugs, \$12.95 on amazon.com These things are fantastic for cutting the volume while not distorting the sound, and by wearing these there's no ears ringing for hours afterwards. *F*



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Sister Organization Events

Discount ticket information: <http://www.gbacg.org/about-gbacg/member-benefits.html>

BAERS: Mansfield Park Ball

May 31, 2014: <http://www.baers.org/index.html#baerscal>

PEERS: Space Cowboys' Ball

June 7, 2014: <http://www.peersdance.org/cowboys.html>

Interested in joining the GBACG or renewing your membership? Want to purchase tickets to events or workshops? You can do all of this on the GBACG website:

- Join/renew your membership: <http://www.gbacg.org/about-gbacg/join-gbacg.html>
- Purchase event tickets: <http://www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html> - see individual event webpages to order online (via PayPal), or to print out a form that you can mail in with a check.
- Purchase workshop tickets: <http://www.gbacg.org/gbacg-calendar.html> . See individual workshop webpages to order online (via PayPal), or to print out a form that you can mail with a check.
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