First, upcoming events. Our next scheduled meeting:

“AUSTEN’S ENGLAND”
John Turner
September 14, 2-4 p.m.
The Chapel, Vermont College of Fine Arts, Montpelier
free and open to the public

Please plan to arrive at 1:30 p.m. as we will have a quick meeting to vote on Chapter Bylaws (see attached).

As a speaker, John Turner was suggested to us by member Carol Madden and her friend Charis Holbrook at the November 2007 start-up meeting. After meeting John and his wife Shirley about a month ago, Deb and Kelly see why he is such a popular speaker. This meeting should be of great interest to the general public as well as our membership. But we need to get the word out! So post a flyer in your favorite bookstore or library, affix one on that public bulletin board in the local grocery store; let Kelly know about newspapers you readily consult for upcoming events; encourage that friend or spouse to join us on the 14th.

We are committed to bringing JASNA to people throughout the state. More spectators mean more members and that of course means more people who will help to plan, advertise and simply talk up JASNA-Vermont! Your efforts pay off in more events, more diverse events, and more JASNA-member-only gatherings.

We thank Vermont College of Fine Arts. Deb was tireless in getting a large and lovely space - The Chapel. The college has allowed us the use of this free of charge.

Any members available to help provide food and/or drink for this meeting? It would make it easier on Lynne Hefferon if a few of us could do as we did for the February tea: make or bring something. Refreshments need not be elaborate. Contact Lynne at hefferon10@comcast.net if you are willing to help.

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JASNA-Vermont will celebrate its first anniversary in January 2009! To finish out the current year and celebrate Jane’s birthday, we have a spectacular December treat: our Jane Austen Birthday Tea will feature the Burlington Country Dancers. This event will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Hauke Center (Champlain College, Burlington) on December 7. Come prepared to participate!!

As mentioned in our May issue, JASNA-Vermont member Mary Beth Bertolini (Middlebury College) will open 2009. PERSUASION, therefore, is the novel to be highlighted on Sunday, 1 March 2009. Her working title is, “The Grace to Deserve: Weighing Merit in Jane Austen’s Persuasion”.

And the rest of 2009 is shaping into an exciting array of speakers and topics! On 7 June 2009 we will be pleased to welcome Hope Greenberg (University of Vermont) who will speak on Fashion in Austen’s Era. There are plans to bring actual garments in order to have visuals to talk about. UVM professor Philip Baruth will close the year with his investigation of The Gothic Novel. As our calendar of events evolves,
news will be posted to the Chapter’s blog. As we move towards an ‘academic-year’ calendar, look for event announcements for the fall 2009 slot, as well as the spring and summer meetings of 2010.

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Our JASNA-VT book group will have its first meeting at Deb’s house on Thursday, October 30 at 7:00 p.m. Continuing the topic of our June meeting, the book under discussion will be Northanger Abbey. We will also discuss the Chicago AGM. This is a JASNA members-only meeting, though guests are welcome if room permits. Please let Deb know (contact information below) whether you can be at this first book group gathering, and if not, let her know if you are interested in participating in the group. We are planning on meeting every other month at member homes...we have a tentative schedule but want to firm that up with the group as to time, books to read, etc...

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Our Chapter welcomes four new members! Francine Page of Essex Junction; Val Medve, also of Essex Junction (and a member of the Burlington Country Dancers); Daphne Walker of Hinesburg; and Christie McCann of Northfield. Welcome to you all!

We take this opportunity to remind ‘annual’ members that your JASNA membership year is up for renewal. You should have received letters with information (due date: September 1). If you have not yet received your renewal letter, let us know.

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Deb and Kelly discussed All Things Austen on Vermont Public Radio on July 3. If you missed the broadcast, you can listen online: go to www.vpr.net and search for Jane Austen; we were the first 40-minutes of the program called VERMONT EDITION, hosted by Jane Lindholm. The downside of this live, call-in show was running out of time before we got to the waiting phone calls and emails! We thank Austen-enthusiast Sarah Ashworth for this opportunity; she is a Vermont Edition producer.

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Deb, Marcia Merrill (our esteemed treasurer) and Kelly spoke about how to raise funds for the chapter. Time and again thoughts turn to what merchandise we might offer.

Deb has the possibility of importing copies of Penelope Byrde’s Jane Austen Fashion; Marcia misses having a really great sleep-tee and is looking into what a Burlington-area firm might have. Have you items to recommend? Or do you produce some product that JASNA-Vermont could sell?

Costs do accrue: xeroxed advertising flyers, postage for mailings, the ‘light refreshments’ we would like to continue to offer. We have been unable to give even nominal honoraria to our speakers, but thankfully have obtained lecture space gratis (so far). As a chapter, we recognize the expenses Deb and Lynne have themselves undertaken in getting our 2008 meetings off the ground. Thank you both.

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The Chapter Blog invites your comments as well as your “guest blogger” posts. (Comments can be added online; for posts, please mail or email Deb or Kelly.) We need your input - and want your comments, suggestions, and ideas. BECOME INVOLVED!
Blog topics can take any form - as can be seen from past posts. For instance, JASNA-Vermont member Mae Mayville wrote a delightful piece on the June meeting that featured Lorraine Hanaway and Mildred Darrow. We will post coming events, “news” stories, member accomplishments, book reviews - the list could go on and on, but it takes your involvement.

We would like to introduce posts that from time to time Spotlight JASNA-Vermont members; if you would be willing to participate, send us information about yourself that you would like to see online (picture optional).

Never forget about participating in JASNA at the national level. Deb for one is to attend (as she does most years) the Chicago AGM - she will report back to the Chapter in late October. Anyone else planning to attend?

Check the Chapter Blog frequently for the latest news, hot off the press! Our URL is http://janeausteninvermont.wordpress.com

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Ideas are always welcome, as are new members and those with an interest in our activities. If you know of people who might like to be on our mailing list for events, please contact Deb or Kelly with information (we need their email and mailing addresses). Members are our best ambassadors, and our most valuable resource. Help get the word out about public events; encourage that neighbor, teacher, friend, spouse, student, child who has an Austen-interest; plan a fundraiser; volunteer your time. As Regional Coordinators, Deb and I are here to help you, but we cannot do it alone.

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Directions to The Chapel, Vermont College of Fine Arts: from Exit 8 off I-89: Follow the access road and make a left at the fourth light, which is Main Street and Route 12 North. Make a right onto East State Street in the middle of town - there’s a stop light in the middle of this disjointed intersection. Vermont College of Fine Arts Campus is at the top of the hill on the right. Right turn on to West Street, left turn on to Ridge Street; College Hall & Chapel (36 College St.) will be on your left. Parking on the street, or designated lots. To see a campus map, go to www.vermontcollege.edu/directions.asp