

Brooklyn Book Festival Sept 12, 2010

Nestled between picture perfect days in September, Sunday, the 12th dawned cloudy and the weather prediction came all too true – it rained six of the eight festival hours. We had to contend with water pouring down the sides of the canopy, trying to keep our supplies dry and dodging umbrellas. But New Yorkers are tough, and many (though certainly less than in previous years) still came to hear the readings and to visit the JASNA-NY booth. The picture on the right shows the crowd during one of our dry hours.



We sold many copies of Austen's novels – they were snatched up by future Janeites. Continuations, “mash ups” and related books, buttons, bags, earrings and bracelets also sold extremely well. One of our buttons sporting a picture of the Brooklyn Bridge and the phrase, “Jane Comes to Brooklyn,” was a hot item at the festival.



Brooklyn is home to many young people (in their 20s and 30s) and they come in droves for the Festival. For those of us who love books, this is a real affirmation that literature is alive and well in the 21st Century. Pictured on the left is one of our young new members, Sarah Seltzer, explaining Austen and JASNA to our visitors.

Our 14 volunteers talked to many people during the day. JASNA gained two new members, 44 people were added to our mailing list and lots of people took our brochure and promised to join our list or become members (some already have).

By 5pm the rain had successfully driven most of the attendees away, but that did not dampen our spirits. Our last three volunteers, Meg Levin, Jennifer Keenan and Susanna Ciurlio helped us pack-up display equipment as well as the remaining inventory, and dodging rain drops as best as possible, helped transport all to our car. Susanna and Jennifer are pictured to the right.



Our volunteers worked hard, but clearly enjoyed themselves as well. Below are some of their comments.

Ann Herendeen said, “It really was a pleasure despite the rain;”

Sarah Seltzer said, “I was thrilled to see how much traffic we got.”

Kathleen Flynn said, “It was a lot of fun. I only wish I was better at chatting people up while shouting over a generator.” (We had a perfect location except for the noisy generator). Here is Kathleen between Irene Jankowski and Margaret Doria during a quiet moment.



Phyllis Fine said, “It was great to see the variety of folks who like Austen. My favorite was the guy who asked if we had any merchandise that would introduce his six-year-old daughter to Austen. I passed him on to Kerri, who did a great job, suggesting both the comic book we had for sale and then the CD of an actress reading Austen juvenilia. He bought both!” Phyllis is on the left next to Kerri and Linda Dennery.

Maureen O'Connor said that she loved watching Shirley Safran's six-year-old granddaughter Emma selling merchandise. To the right are Maureen, Lorraine Rhinow and Kerri.



To the left is Shirley's granddaughter, Emma, holding a copy of *Emma*. Little Emma will soon have a Regency dress made by our region's official costumer, Maureen. Proceeds will be donated to AGM 2012.

Shirley said, "It was really great fun, despite the wet stuff...and wasn't it heartening to see all those young potential Janeites stopping by, asking questions, buying books, etc."

Speaking of our Pug's Coordinator and merchandiser, Kerri Spennicchia, Meg Levin said, "I always assumed she (Kerri) had a lot of do running Pug's, but it's only seeing it 'backstage' that makes you realize the amount of thought and effort (and manual labor!) she puts in." Pictured here, Kerri is making a sale. We couldn't do it without her. Below Kerri is finally sitting at the end of the day. With her is Meg Levin.



Also volunteering were Allie Bruce, pictured below, and Elizabeth Freedman (not pictured).

