

Blairstown Celebrates Friday the 13th

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BLAIRSTOWN -- Horror movie fans flocked to Blairstown to celebrate the latest instance of Friday the 13th showing up on the calendar, with many enjoying deals from local businesses and getting the chance to meet an actor from the original movie of the same name.

Jeanette Iurato, curator of the Blairstown Museum, said the museum sold 150 tickets to meet Ari Lehman, who played the movie franchise's villain, Jason, as a child in the first film in 1980. In addition to the tickets, Iurato estimates that 5,000 people passed through the town Friday, including about 1,000 who toured the museum.

Lehman, who had not returned to Blairstown since filming the movie nearly 40 years ago, was at the museum from 3 to 10 p.m. signing autographs and posing for photos with attendees, Iurato said. He also talked with each guest for a few minutes about how it felt to be in a major film while he was just a teenager.

"He seemed to have had a very positive experience with the movie," Iurato said. "It's still a huge part of his life, even today."

Friday afternoon also saw two couples renew their wedding vows at Blair Falls at 2:30 and 4:13 p.m. Steven and Angela Bender, who were married at the site on the last Friday the 13th in October, were on hand Friday to celebrate the renewed vows, and Iurato said they hope to return for future weddings in Blairstown.

Friday's festivities also featured a marketplace with local vendors selling Friday the 13th-themed items, which Iurato said all sold out by the end of the night. Local businesses -- including Buck Hill Brewery, Post Time Pub and Barber on Main -- got involved by offering various discounts.

Overall, Iurato was encouraged by the turnout Friday, and her goal is for the event to continue to grow on future Friday the 13th dates.

"I hope that as the years go on, this will be embraced by even more businesses outside the historic district," Iurato said.