

Festival 2014 Final Report

REGISTRATION GROUP REPORT

Chair: Barbara Dennison

Registrar: John Charman

Registration Committee: Helgi & Sharen Goodman, Mississippi Squares

Camping/ RV: Robert Lamarche

Hotels: Lloyd Adams, Wendy VanderMeulen

Welcoming Committee: Dave Currie, Bob Forsyth, Village Squares

On-Site Angels (Volunteers): Robert Lamarche

Registrar

John Charman managed the registration data using Access database. It worked well and generated all necessary reports.

Final breakdown of attendees was as follows:

Canada: 924	USA: 122
Alberta – 50	Arizona – 2
British Columbia – 38	California – 12
Manitoba – 14	Florida – 9
New Brunswick – 20	Illinois – 2
Nova Scotia – 33	Indiana – 4
Ontario – 679 (450 from EOSARDA)	Kansas – 2
Prince Edward Island – 2	Maine – 8
Quebec – 67	Massachusetts – 15
Saskatchewan – 17	Michigan – 2
Yukon Territory – 4	Minnesota – 4
	New Hampshire – 17
Qatar: 2	New Jersey – 2
	New York – 11
Australia: 3	Ohio – 2
	Pennsylvania – 2
Japan: 4	Tennessee – 1
	Texas – 9
	Vermont – 8
	Virginia – 1
Total: 1,055	

Breakdown of dancers by dance form (totals more than 1,055 as some registered for squares AND rounds, for example):

Squares		Rounds		Other	
Basics	65	Phase 2	80	Clogging Basic	1
Mainstream	157	Phase 3	104	Clogging Int.	8
Plus	491	Phase 4	49	Cloging Adv.	4
A1	90	Phase 5	17	Line	9
A2	148	Phase 6	8	Contra	14
Challenge	30			Wheelchair	10

Festival 2014 Final Report

Hotels

The original Steering Committee contemplated not dealing with hotels at all and letting dancers find their own accommodations. Ottawa is a large city and hotels and other accommodations are almost “a dime a dozen.” However, it was determined that this decision might prevent some dancers from attending, so we went ahead with arranging the details. We originally decided that 4 hotels with a range of room rates would be sufficient. However, about 18 months prior to Festival, a fifth hotel was added.

On the advice of our contact at the Westin Hotel, we asked each hotel that was approached if they would incorporate a “Convention Assistance Program” amount of \$10 per room night in their rate. This something that hotels do to assist convention planners with their bottom line. All hotels agreed. We ended out booking the following hotels:

The Westin Ottawa – attached to the Ottawa Convention Centre and advertised as our “Official Headquarters Hotel” – 145 rooms per night, July 16-19 – original rate of \$199 was reduced to \$169

Novotel Ottawa – across the street from the Rideau Centre (shopping mall attached to the OCC) – no specific number of rooms – on an “if available” basis – rate of \$149

Lord Elgin – across the Rideau Canal (approx. 1.5 blocks) – 150 rooms per night, July 16-19 – rate of \$154

Les Suites – beside the Novotel (approx. 2 blocks away) – 70 one-bedroom suites at a rate of \$169 and 30 two-bedroom suites at a rate of \$229 – July 16-19

Quality Hotel – approx. 6 blocks from OCC – 65 rooms with 1 Queen bed (and pullout sofa) at a rate of \$124 and 10 rooms with 2 Double beds (and a pullout sofa) at a rate of \$134 – July 16-19

All hotels offered the same rate for 2 or 3 days before and after the Festival. Quite a few people took advantage of that offer and extended their visit to Ottawa.

Total pick up was as follows:

Westin: 339

Novotel: 37

Lord Elgin: 55

Les Suites: 103

Quality Hotel: 54

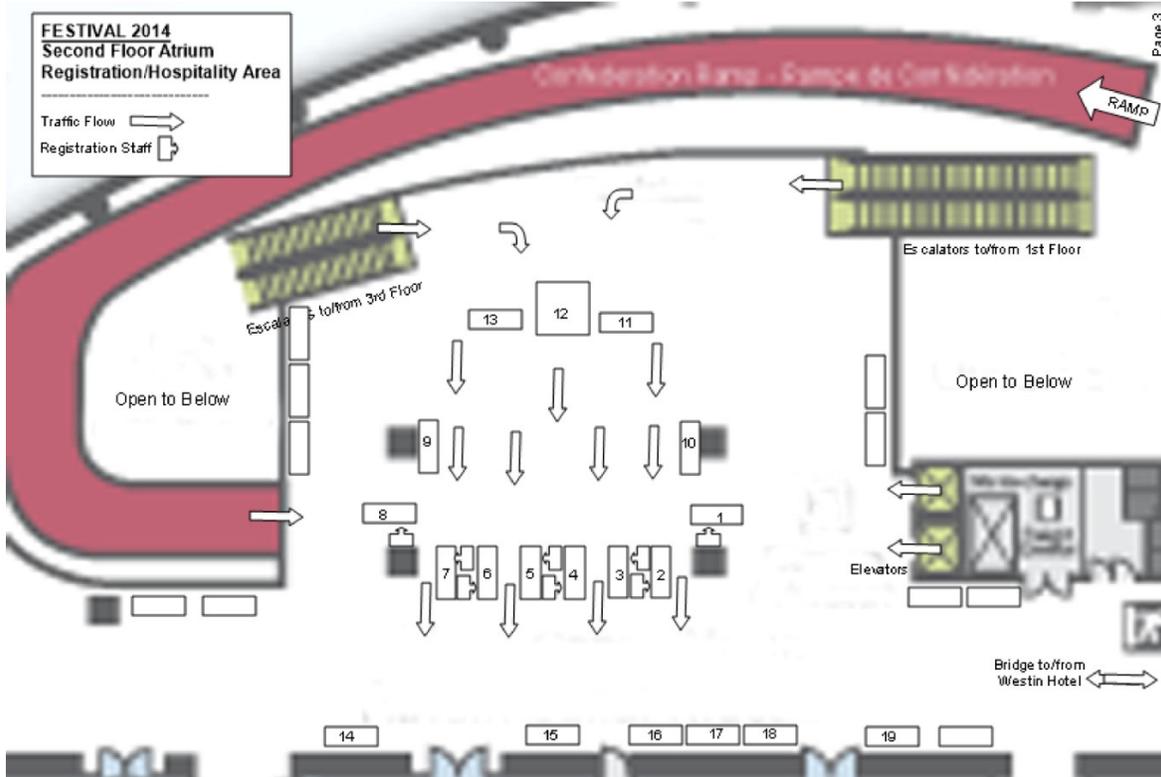
It’s a lot of work to visit hotels and negotiate contracts with no attrition; however, with the CAP revenue, it was well worth the effort.

Registration Committee

The registration committee consisted of 2 people and they had several responsibilities from the planning stage of the convention to the finale. Their list of responsibilities was the following:

1. Registration forms – the committee chose the most economical commercial printing business, ordered and delivered over 18,000 registration forms or more to Board members, clubs, special events etc.
2. The Registration set-up was on the 2nd floor of the Ottawa Convention Centre. This committee determined the access entrance points to the 2nd floor, emergency stairs and outside stairs. The area was measured for room and furnishing dimensions. Once that was completed the floor plan was designed and it included space for the Registration tables, the Ottawa Tourism kiosk, Hospitality, Lost & Found etc.

3. The table set-up was as follows:



- Table 1 serviced Special needs registrations and new registrations (Full & Daily) & as such handled the monies. Tables 2 to 7 serviced general registrations and these were labeled alphabetically. Table 8 handled Leader registrations, new (Full & Daily) registrations & also handled the monies. Table 9 & 10 had a supply of blank forms for Full and Daily registrations. Walk-ins were requested to complete their forms at one of these tables prior to registering at Table 1 or 8. Table numbers were reduced, on an allowed basis during the Festival. Tables 11 & 13 were for the Welcoming Committee's use and they worked closely with the Ottawa Tourism kiosk (Table 12). Table 14 was for Camping/RV services. Tables 15 - 19 were used for sales of any promotional items.
4. Signage – Two vertical banners (22" x 78") identified the Registration area and they were placed in the middle of the traffic area between the elevators and the escalators. Smaller Registration signage was placed in the area between the elevators and the bridge from the Westin. The leaders found bargains at Staple Stores and these signs certainly decorated the Registration Floor.
 5. Registration Committee Members collected gold pins and Canadian flags from MPs and MPPs. These items were inserted in Registration packages for our guests.
 6. The registration leaders had several volunteers donate their time to assist in the Registration process. They manned the Registration tables and welcomed all visitors. The leaders made badges for their volunteers which worked extremely well.

Welcoming Committee

This committee of 2 visited Ottawa Tourism to determine how they could help our convention. This was a great idea as Tourism wrote letters to the Governor General, the Mayor of Ottawa etc. Ottawa Tourism provided brochures to the Welcoming Committee that provided all the important information and details that would assist us. Ottawa Tourism provided a kiosk that was located on the Registration floor. The Welcoming committee had volunteers to share the time slots with Tourism during the convention. The leaders of the

Festival 2014 Final Report

Welcoming Committee and Ottawa Tourism worked closely together. Tourism provided a list of restaurants, a list of things to do and the many sites to see while in Ottawa. They certainly were an asset to Festival 2014. The welcoming group designed a welcoming letter that was placed in each registration envelope. The committee prepared their signs for each of the hotels, for each campsite & to ensure a revolving electronic sign was at the airport to welcome all dancers. This revolving message was in both English and French. They hung large banners near the escalators and the windows on the Registration floor. They visited each hotel on an ongoing basis to ensure signs were visible & to meet the contacts at each hotel. Since the parking lot, at the convention center, was so large and had many entrances the leaders posted directional signs close to the parking entrances.

Volunteers

A mail chimp requesting volunteers for Festival 2014 was circulated to all the clubs in the area. This generated a number of inquiries as to what was expected from the volunteers. A second mail chimp was circulated. The reply sheet had blanks for name, address, club affiliation, telephone number, email and boxes to mark off the task of interest to the volunteers. The reply sheet was re-issued periodically and was inserted in the last six issues of Square Time. The initial request generated about 40 percent of the volunteers. Names kept trickling in over the next two years. The last 40 percent of the volunteers were generated in the last two months before the Festival. The volunteer information collected was entered added to a spread sheet and sent to the committee heads as requested. The total number of volunteers was seventy four. In addition, some clubs performed tasks as a group.

Camping / RV

To accommodate campers, three campgrounds were contacted: the Ottawa Municipal Campground in the west end, and Hither Hills and Poplar Grove in the south end of the city. A shuttle service was offered for dancers requiring this service. Campers were contacted, emailed, advised of the rates and the services available at their campground. This information was added to the Festival website. Unfortunately the registration form did not provide space where dancers could indicate if they were campers etc. The only campers known to us were those that contacted the lead person for Camping and Shuttle Services. Therefore no hard numbers were available to plan the shuttle service. Originally we planned on a morning and evening shuttle. Due to the feedback we received from the campers, a noon and supper hour were added to the shuttle service. In all, there were only 25 rigs registered at campgrounds. This was disappointing.

On-Site Angels (Volunteers)

Early on, before it was really understood exactly what volunteers would be needed, Robert prepared a form for people to fill in and submit (see next page). He tracked the names of the people and where they were willing to volunteer. Many of the items on the form ended out being handled directly by the committee involved (e.g. helping with stuffing registration bags or at the registration desk) and some were not even required, in the end (e.g. laying flooring and putting up decorations). The resulting list was eventually passed on to Wendy VanderMeulen who contacted the people to see if, in the end, they would be willing to help out as room monitors, which turned out to be the biggest need for "on-site" volunteers. Some were also needed at the Ways & Means Table, but that was one location as opposed to the 8 dance halls. It was hard work to get enough to people to fill the necessary time slots, so in the end, room monitors were doubled up in the 2 Advanced Halls the 2 Round Dance Halls. In the end, it all seemed to work out just fine.

We are very grateful for the 3 or 4 non-dancers who came out strictly to help as room monitors and at the Ways & Means table.

Festival 2014 Final Report

Festival 2014 Request for Volunteers.

Below are sample tasks where, during the festival, volunteers are required. Please place a check mark on the line in front of the tasks for which you are willing to volunteer. I look forward to receiving your reply.

Please forward your response to me by e-mail.

Name: _____

Name: _____

Tel number _____

e-mail address _____

Club: _____

- _____ Yes I can volunteer.
- _____ Wednesday July 16th 2014 can help laying down the rented hardwood tiles.
- _____ Saturday July 19th 2014 can help picking up the rented hardwood tiles.
- _____ Can help stuffing information envelopes.
- _____ Can help stuffing the souvenir grab bags.
- _____ Can take a shift at the registration desk.
- _____ Can take a shift at the information desk.
- _____ Can help with decorations.
- _____ Can help putting up signs.
- _____ Can help with teardown and clean up.
- _____ I go south for the winter & I will take registration forms to clubs where I dance.

A prompt answer either positive or negative would be appreciated.

Robert Lamarche, Volunteer Committee rlama@xplornet.com

Phone 613-258-7426, Cell 613-277-2093.

Festival 2014 Final Report

In Closing

All in all it was a great convention, the folks that attended thought Festival 2014 was wonderful, the Convention Center was fabulous, and the weather was beautiful. Everyone was happy and most of all, the dancers had fun. All committees and volunteers worked well together and they did a fabulous job. All the very best to Saskatoon, Sask. in 2016.

Recommendations for future conventions:

1. It is necessary to shorten the time frames for Committee tasks. Committee groups would show more enthusiasm and volunteers would be more willing to commit to helping if the time required to do the tasks were considerably shorter; and they can be, due to automation, electronics, media, websites, map quest & communication abilities.
2. We spent weeks, months and years on timelines when really the list of responsibilities was outdated. I think the committees can green light what needs to be done or if the Board members make a list of items we can work from there. The Welcoming group should be part of publicity working along with Tourism.
3. The Registration group should be responsible for mailing out registrations to out of town clubs, out of town conventions etc.
4. Registration forms need to include an option for dancers to indicate if they are planning to camp.