

Minutes of the North American Festival of Wales committee meeting, Richmond Inn, Richmond.
March 8, 2003

Present: Alan Upshall (chair), Lynne Owens Whalen (vice-chair), Gerri Baker Parry, Phil Humphries, David Lintern, Helen Steinle, Neville Thomas, Gaynor Evans

Richmond Inn:

165 room nights have been reserved already with 159 of these for Friday night, thus we are already meeting nearly half our guaranteed bookings.

Program Ads:

Evans Paschal is the main coordinator with Rhidian Lawrence. Alan, Greta and Gerri will be meeting with them in the near future to help with the start of the brochure team.

Registration:

The forms were not mailed out on the planned date as HQ was awaiting information from the Wales Tourist Board on their draw for a "week in Wales". The registration package will be sent out in the next week regardless of whether this information has been received.

The NAFOW registration package has already been mailed out to the committee together with the excellent new brochure put together by Don and Peggy. Format of forms (registration, Eisteddfod etc.) will be used for future Festivals. Alan is in contact with an Insurance Company with regard to Personal Liability and Cancellation Insurance. We are a sub committee of the WNGGA and all responsibility for the Festival lies with them.

* There is a slight error in registration fee for Canadians. Alan will bring to Ellis' attention.

Brian's Plan:

Brian's position is to set up the logistics for the running of the Festival weekend and to make sure that everyone and everything is in place. We need two people on site; one to look after the technical side and one to organize the volunteers. It is up to the individuals involved in the different events to update Brian on equipment etc. needed so that the written plan can be kept updated.

The wording in the last minutes to read, "Matches Bar will be available to us for Thursday and Friday evenings and all day Thursday, Friday and Saturday as needed.

Treasurer:

Bank balance: \$772.73Can. + \$2,769.90US

\$3,850.00US has been received from David Morris as sponsorship of the semi-professional solo Eisteddfod prize. Also \$97US has been donated by Greta Upshall for her knitwear sold at the Seattle St. David's Day celebration.

Helen will ask Ellis to send a letter to David Morris recognizing his donation, for tax purposes.

We are now financially able to sign a contract with the Richmond Inn and the Orpheum Theater when needed.

Helen has been in touch with the bank and cheques made out to WNGGA can go into our Canadian bank account. She will also get information on whether we will need a GST number and if so Ellen will need to add a GST expense item to the budget.

Helen will contact Ellis to find out the exact amount HQ takes out of the registration fee for administration costs and whether in US funds. The money owing can be paid out of our US account.

Updated Budget:

The numbers are changing as we progress and our realistic goal is our target profit of \$74,737. Budget restraints must be adhered to and more sponsorship found in order to make the Festival a success. Our profit goal is sponsorship plus \$20 - \$30,000.

David suggested that we need to raise the registration fees for future Festivals.

Question as to why the budget sheet does not show a revenue for the Program and why the \$3,000 advance is not shown? The advance is an omission and the program budget will be incorporated. Alan advised that the expenses for the shuttle buses are included in the projected expenses for the Grand Concert.

Sunday Activities:

David and Alan have visited McNeil Sec. School and confirmed that it is suitable for the Gymanfa Ganu. There is a large foyer to accommodate guests arriving and there is car parking available. We now need to find out how many chairs can be placed in the gym and how much aisle space will be needed. The Welsh Societies that possess the long banners will be asked to lend them for the weekend and the appropriate committee will oversee the decorating.

There are three different hymn books in circulation, some with different hymn numbers. The hymn numbers for each book will be noted on the Gymanfa program to avoid confusion.

Hymn books will be on sale at the Marketplace.

Discussion as to how many buses will be needed to ferry guests to and from the school for both Gymanfa sessions. It was suggested that we try to get two separate contracts.

Contract (1) to have 7 buses from 1.00pm to 7.00pm

Contract (2) to have 7 buses from 4.00pm to 10.00pm

There will be 14 buses available from 4.00pm to 7.00pm to accommodate ferrying guests from the school for the Intersessional meal at the hotel and back to the school for the second session.

Lynne will contact the Richmond School District to find out if we can use their school buses and if so the cost of each bus. She will also find out the cost per bus from a private bus company, by the next meeting. We need to check with the hotel as to how the buses can be managed in and out of the car park.

Poems and Pints:

A letter has been sent to the Vancouver Orpheus Choir inviting them to participate in the Poems and Pints evening. Neville suggested that the Friday evening would be a better choice as the choir could conflict with the Dylan Thomas group on Thursday evening. The Orpheus has been informed that this will not be a choir concert but rather an informal social event with individuals also taking part.

Outdoor Opening Ceremony:

Richmond City Hall location has been checked out and would be ideal as it has an outdoor stage with electricity outlets and lots of open space for spectators. Alan has spoken with the representative from City Hall re. the feasibility of using the space and he was very receptive to the idea. Alan will be in touch with him again to confirm.

The Thursday bus tour can end at the Richmond Inn or at City Hall.

It was suggested that we invite The Cambrian Circle Singers and the Vancouver Folk Dancers to take part in the ceremony. The VWMC has already confirmed their participation.

Shuttle Buses to Orpheum:

Discussion as to how many buses will be needed to transport approx. 800 guests to the Grand Concert.

It was decided not to stagger departure times of the buses from the Hotel but rather have 14 buses available for departure at 6.00pm and 14 buses to leave the Orpheum at approx. 10.00pm. Guests arriving on the first buses could be entertained for about 1/2 an hour (e.g. Whitney Ladies Choir). Guests could find out at registration which bus they are assigned to.

Eisteddfod:

Inquiries have been made but forms will not be sent out until HQ has mailed out registration forms. It is not feasible to hold preliminaries as we do not have the time and also Jeff Howard, who will accompany the soloists, will not arrive until Friday morning. We can accommodate 6 entrants for each event. Gateway Theater is available to us on Friday until 5.00pm and Saturday morning. We can also have the use of the theater on Friday evening if needed with the extra expense of cost of Gateway workers.

Catering:

The catering committee has 6 different functions to oversee, with each member being responsible for a particular event. They also will take care of decorations for each function and Lynne showed different size tin cans that could be used as a plant pot. They could be decorated with a red cover with the Festival logo and a small Canadian and American flag could be displayed.

Cook Book:

Forms are available for submission of recipes for the cook book and these need to be circulated as soon as possible. An address or fax number and the deadline date of April 30th should be added to the form. Richmond Tourism will have a booth with information on restaurants in the area, as the hotel restaurant is usually very busy on Sundays with local patrons. Peggy is to be asked to cost having a flag/banner made, with the Festival logo.

Publicity and Tickets:

A new brochure will be printed later this month and will be available at our next committee meeting and also for hand out at the next VWMC concert. A name for the Grand Concert has still not been decided but should be as soon as possible as a concert poster will be printed in April. Ticket Master has agreed to handle all sales to non-registrants for a 5% commission and has waived commissions on registrants sales. Ticket master will print all tickets, including 1200 reserved for delegates etc. at a cost of \$180 (\$0.15 per ticket) the rest will be sold through their outlets and via the telephone and e-mail. There were questions on the proposed contract and Alan will speak with Don regarding these. Registration, Tours and Eisteddfod forms will be added to our web site over the next few weeks and it is imperative that these print off with correct tabs, margins, spaces etc. so that they are acceptable to HQ. Don suggested that we all make a note of Celtic festivals in the area so that we can promote the NAFOW with our presence.

Market Place:

Gerri handed out car window stickers, that she had produced, to help promote the weekend. She has been in touch with Canada Customs and has sent for a letter of recognition to hand to vendors crossing the border with merchandise. Richmond does not have a business license for a one day event, but advised that if we have a closed Market Place we will not need one anyway. Gerri has sent out about 100 letters and e-mails to prospective vendors and anticipates that some will only want to display pamphlets. Phil will check out finding a stand to display pamphlets/brochures and this can be placed in the hotel foyer or corridor. Gerri has a floor plan for 8ft tables. Vendors will pay a deposit of \$25 and will be charged \$125 for one table; \$100 for a second table and \$65 for a half table. Vendors sending only pamphlets will be charged \$15. Mendelsons will act as brokers.

Grand Concert:

Lynne and Alan have been in touch with Phil Beynon and the concert in Surrey with the Duvant Male Choir is going ahead. The venue for the concert should not have an impact on the Festival concert at the Orpheum and so we will move ahead with our plans.

Volunteers:

A letter will be sent out to all volunteers with a list of all events. They must decide and let us know which events they would like to assist with.

A coordinator is needed to oversee all volunteers. Alan has a contact in Seattle, Wyn Morgan, and he will approach her to take over this role. We will also need someone from Vancouver to liaise with Wyn and Gaynor E. agreed to do this.

Alan had received an e-mail from a professional audio company with regard to looking after the technical side of the Festival weekend. Alan will look into.

Discuss at next meeting: Do we want to sell t-shirts with logo at the market Place?
Do the committee and volunteers have any benefits?
Which dignitaries do we recognize?

Next meetings: Saturday April 12th, 11am
Saturday May 3rd
Saturday May 31st