

SESSION TICKETS

From an Article by M Dawes WA

(whilst this article was written in relationship to a Perth National Convention, Many points are relevant for Other National & State Conventions.)

The most asked question about any National is "Why can't we have session tickets?", and many who ask don't like the answer, don't bother to think it through and end up saying "Well, I'm not paying all that money -I won't go" and turn their backs on one of the best dance experiences they'll ever have.

Try and imagine (no, I'm not asking you to give up 3 years of your life, just imagine), you are elected to a National Convention Committee. The two most pressing questions are "When will we hold it?" and "Where will we hold it?". The first answer is comparatively easy.

Australian Nationals are supposed to be held between Easter and 30th June but W.A. received special permission to hold it this year in September.

Personally, I can't see why - wildflowers depend on our winter rains and we can get some mean, nasty gales during September - let's hope I'm totally wrong on this one, this year.

The second question "WHERE will we hold it?" is another story. Remember, this is a NATIONAL - not your Club's birthday night - you are hoping lots of interstate callers and dancers will visit and maybe a few from overseas plus, of course, your own State dancers who'll jump at the chance to have a big event in their own back yard!!

You check the number attending the last two or three Nationals and find it was around 800/900 so you start looking for a hall that will accommodate that number of dancers.

But it is not just a big hall you need.

1. Plenty of car parking space.
2. Adequate toilet facilities and change rooms.
3. A child care facility or a room that can be used as one.
4. Room for hundreds of seats for dancers to put their jackets and bags on and occasionally sit on.
5. Space and seats for spectators, we must promote square dancing mustn't we?
6. Somewhere to sit and enjoy a cuppa during general round ups.

7. Good acoustics - this should be NO.1 on the list.
8. Booth space - advertise next year's National, sell & buy badges, records, petticoats & shirts, etc.
9. A Callers' room. Yes, folks, callers get butterflies and some need to run through their calls before they face all 800 of you.
10. At least one other hall on the same premises, which brings us to the dance program
11. a. Mainstream.
Many dancers still dance only mainstream and a good caller - both local and interstate) calling GOOD mainstream is hard to beat.
11. b. Plus. Of course one must cater for those who have moved on to plus.
11. c. A Level. And now there are A Level dancers who desire recognition and dancing at their level.
11. d. Rounds. Round dancers are not content (nor should they be) with just 30 minutes before a square dance evening. They need full Round Dance sessions.
11. e. Clogging. Whether you like it or hate it, clogging is recognised as an "allied form of dancing" to square dancing and must be catered for.
11. f. Contra. See clogging above.

So are you going to fit all these different dance sessions into one day, say Saturday?

Probably not, so some have to spill over into Sunday and maybe Friday too, and you might have to hire another hall as well.

Trail-in and Trail-out dances have long been held at the main venue, after all, it means the stage, sound etc. only has to be set up once and interstate visitors don't have to drive around a strange city looking for ANOTHER hall.

NOW you start pricing likely halls and centre's around town. Go on - do it! Don't take my word for it.

Ring around and ask the cost of hiring somewhere from Thursday to Monday, not forgetting you need setting up time for stage, sound decorations, booths etc. etc.

I'll wager the prices will be an eye opener.

Of course you'll have to inspect these places to see if they are suitable - see items 1 - 11.

I haven't mentioned meetings yet. Several meeting rooms have to be available, if none at your chosen venue they must be hired elsewhere .

A NATIONAL is one time of the year when Callers, Cuers, State Presidents and members of various National Square Dance bodies can get together in their respective groups and discuss any problems common to all, and generally work for the betterment of square dancing and the enjoyment of same for you, the dancer.

They ALL pay their dancer registration fee, pay their way here, just like YOU.

There are many other expenses that have to be taken into account but the venues are the main cost and our 800 dancers have to pay for them.

When W.A. started having session tickets for State Conventions the hall bulged at the seams because of the size of the crowd on the SATURDAY night but on the other nights it was half empty.

This kills the atmosphere and destroys the concept of a Convention and would not be appreciated by Eastern States visitors who have paid air fares and accommodation to attend.

Also. session tickets for all those sessions would be an administrative nightmare

NOW do you understand why there are no Session Tickets?

MOLL Y DAWES.