



Riverboat Days 2017 Stats & Facts

Summary:

- The 2017 Riverboat Days program featured 53 events.
- Significant traffic was received on the Riverboat Days website, including 7000 visits to the online Events Schedule.
- The Legion Parade crowd estimate is 6300 people.
- The Concerts in the Park Headline Act crowd estimate ranges from 3000 to 4300, (with a possible high of 5500).
- The Movie in the Park crowd estimate is 700-800.
- The combined audience for the two shows of Freestyle Motocross Madness is approximately 2500 people.

Events: The 2017 program listed 53 events. 3 events did not take place. 2 of these (Tsimshian History Presentation and Kitsumkalum Su-Sit-Aatk Anniversary Celebration) will be held later in the year. Those registered for Dragon Boating, which was cancelled due to high winds, were invited by the Dragon Boat Society to participate during a regular evening practice.

The number of events was down from previous years, mostly attributable to the Arts Society not holding a Summer Arts Festival this year.

The first week of Riverboat Days 2017 was held during a heat wave, with forest fires elsewhere in BC resulting in highway closures, evacuations and extensive drifting smoke. It is quite likely hot weather affected visitation to the Terrace area and attendance at several Riverboat Days events held outdoors. Periods of light rain and moderate temperatures returned on the second weekend of Riverboat Days.

Riverboat Days Promotions:

A Riverboat Days poster circulates within Terrace beginning about one month prior to Riverboat Days. Approximately 150 posters were produced this year. Members of the Youth Volunteer Corps assisted with circulation of the poster among Terrace businesses. Event organizers also produce posters. Examples are Concerts in the Park and Freestyle Motocross.

The main printed Riverboat Days resource is a booklet published by Black Press and distributed free of charge through retail outlets, local accommodation facilities and public places such as the library, George Little House and Visitor Centre. The booklet contains an events schedule, information on the headline act for Concerts in the Park and additional planning tools. The print run is 5000-6000. Nearly all are taken within days of distribution. Black Press also publishes an events schedule in regional papers in the days before Riverboat Days.

Radio advertising campaigns are arranged with CFNR and Bell Media. The latter includes an on air and website based contest to light the cannon which starts Riverboat Days at the Opening Ceremonies. A central feature of the radio advertising is to encourage traffic to the Riverboat Days website (www.riverboatdays.ca).

Website visitation is encouraged to facilitate awareness of the latest news about Riverboat Days, especially any event schedule changes. Riverboat Days also has a Facebook page, which was well utilized this year with posting of event updates and photos from Riverboat Days. Volunteer help was acquired to improve our social media programs.

Website Statistics: (from July 1 to August 13)

Typically the website receives fewer than 200 “sessions” per day at the start of this period but trends upwards. (“Session” best represents website visits. “Pageviews” and “Hits” are much higher numbers). Traffic surges entering

the BC Day long weekend, to descend quickly after. Significantly, relative to local population, many people are seeking the online Events Schedule and program for Concerts in the Park.

Average Sessions/Day: 350

Peak Day: (Saturday, August 5) 2000 Sessions

Total Sessions: 15,400

Most requested pages:

Schedule of Events - 7000 (6744 downloads)

Concerts in the Park Line Up - 2460 (545 downloads)

Event Attendance:

Given few Riverboat Days events charge admission and there are no useful surrogates for calculating attendance (e.g., souvenir handouts, hotdog sales), the Riverboat Days Society has been challenged to estimate attendance at most of its larger events. Attendance numbers are often requested by potential sponsors. Attendance numbers are also the foundation for visitor surveys and improved marketing. The Society has neither the finances nor enough members to undertake crowd counts on its own.

For 2017, assistance was provided by the Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC) under the auspices of the Terrace Volunteer Bureau. YVC members helped with poster distribution and crowd counting for the Legion Parade and Concerts in the Park. YVC also organized its own event within the Street Fair Medley. In CANstruction participants build structures with cans of food or similar goods. It is both an artistic activity and for community benefit, as the food is passed along to Food Banks.

Legion Riverboat Days Parade:

Method: Four two person teams of YVC members were equipped with manual counters/clickers and an orthophoto image of Lakelse Avenue and walked assigned portions of the parade route. The count was commenced once the parade arrived at each survey location. Most teams took about 20 minutes to undertake the count. Each team was given a one or two block section of the parade route and an optional second section of the parade route, if time permitted. Most completed both the primary and secondary assignments.

This resulted in approximately 80% of the parade route being surveyed. Using the data collected by the YVC members, a member of the Riverboat Days Society extrapolated numbers for the remaining portions of the parade route. It was observed from the numbers collected that crowd density diminishes on the east end of the parade route and that one cannot assume similar numbers on either side of a block.

2017 Legion Parade Attendance was estimated at 6300 people. Given approximately 80% of the parade route was walked, this estimate is provided with a high level of confidence.

Concerts in the Park Headline Performance:

Concerts in the Park is an afternoon of music and festivities in George Little Park, culminating in the early evening with a more renowned musical performance. This year the featured act was celebrated Canadian rock band 54.40. As visitors come and go all day at the event, getting a total audience count is very difficult. The exercise was only to determine attendance at the one time of the headline act performance.

Method: Using a grid pattern drawn over an orthophoto of George Little Park, one member of the YVC and one member the RBDs Society used manual counters to determine crowd numbers within portions of the Park. The locations chosen were intended to be representative of high, medium and low density clusters in the audience. The count commenced at around 8 pm during the headline act.

One objective was to determine a density for each area (low, medium, high), which could be employed to estimate crowds over the entire Park. The two people undertaking the count also together sketched those high,

medium and low density areas on the orthophoto. To support this activity, photographs of the park layout (sound equipment, tents) had been taken the day before.

It is estimated that about 115,000 sq. ft. of land area in the Park could be occupied during a performance from the bandshell. The crowd count occurred on just under 20% of the 115,000 sq. ft. This was a very hot day and evening, with temperatures over 30 degrees. The shade of trees and tents was prized by spectators. This will be a consideration if drone photography is used in future crowd counting exercises.

Despite areas appearing to have similar density, a first and key observation from the numbers collected is that no consistent crowd densities presented themselves. For example, near the front of the audience and under the Big Tent, density varied from 1 person for every 9.5 sq. ft. to 1 person for every 27 sq. ft. Towards Davis Avenue, density fell to 1 person for every 75 sq. ft.

These crowd densities are low compared with published information. A report in Popular Mechanics describes a light crowd as 1 person per 10 sq. ft. and a dense crowd as 1 person per 4.5 sq. ft. However, at Concerts in the Park many in the audience are not standing but sitting on chairs or using blankets. Plus pathways seem to develop within the crowd and this year people sought the shade, leaving large open areas of grass.

Estimated Crowd for Headline Act:

Given the inconsistent crowd densities, a range of numbers is offered. Using the least favourable densities, the low estimate would be 2925; using the most favourable densities, the high estimate is 5500 (equivalent to 1 person per 21 sq. ft.). Using judiciously the numbers acquired in the survey, the crowd estimate is 4365 (1 per 26 sq. ft.).

In summary, with good confidence the 2017 crowd was around 3000 people, a crowd estimate of 4300 is defensible and, with low confidence, may have been as high as 5500.

Movie in the Park:

This was the second year in which a feature film had been presented outside, mid-week in George Little Park. In 2016, on a cool evening, a quick count of between 300 and 400 was made. The 2017 event was held in perfect conditions as very hot temperatures moderated after sunset.

Method: A member of the Terrace Riverboat Days Society walked the crowd with a manual clicker approximately 10-15 minutes before show time (10 pm). The count was just below 600 people. As the start time had been changed that day from 10:30 pm, audience numbers continued to climb after the tally had been made. A walk around the audience later during screening of the film revealed that many more people had since arrived. A count was no longer possible due to darkness. Most of the audience remained to the film's conclusion around midnight.

Movie in the Park Crowd Estimate: 700-800 (good confidence)

Freestyle Motocross Madness:

Freestyle Motocross Madness took place with two shows at 2 pm and 4 pm on an exceedingly hot afternoon in the Skeena Mall parking lot. The show is presented by exceptional motocross riders performing on-ground wheel stands and acrobatic tricks off a steep ramp.

Method: Photographs were taken of the crowd from the roof of the Skeena Mall, for the 2 pm show. Meanwhile a member of the Riverboat Days Society used a manual counter to count some sections of the audience (at both shows). The photographs were used for actual counting with the results from the manual count used to estimate attendance in areas not covered by the photographs and to improve confidence in the photo method. The 3 photographs used were taken over a 20 minute period beginning just after 2 pm. Therefore, the early photographs likely do not show the entire audience, as people continued to migrate to the show.

The 3 crowd photographs do not show the crowd adjacent to the mall building. This was an area where the crowd was most dense, since it was one of the few shaded areas available on a very hot afternoon. A manual count was taken for some of this area for the 4pm show and used to estimate the numbers for the 2 pm show, recognizing the 2 pm show was larger.

For the 2 pm show the crowd estimate is 1630 (min. 1450 - max 1700) (moderate confidence)

For the 4 pm show the crowd estimate is 850-1000

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