



## Riverboat Days 2018 Stats and Facts

### Summary:

- The 2018 program featured 73 events, a substantial increase over the 53 events of 2017.
- Much of this increase is attributable to the return of the Terrace and District Arts Council Summer Arts Festival and inclusion of the new Salmon Arts Fest.
- Crowd counts were not conducted for the Parade nor Concerts in the Park this year but reports were that crowd numbers were very strong. Weather was ideal this year, compared with oppressive heat in previous years.
- The Movie in the Park attendance count was 800-900 people. This event has increased its attendance for three consecutive years.

**Events:** The return of the TDAC Summer Arts Festival and addition of several Skeena Salmon Art Fest events within Riverboat Days 2018 brought the number of events over 70 and provided an excellent balance among cultural, sports and music events. Only one event listed in the 2018 program was not held. Due to airplane mechanical problems the headline act for Concerts in the Park was not able to perform. Attendance at Concerts in the Park was still reported to be very strong throughout the day.

Riverboat Days 2017 was held during a heat wave and forest fires, evacuations and highway closures elsewhere likely affected attendance at Riverboat Days. 2018 did not face such challenges. High temperatures prior to Riverboat Days 2018 moderated just in time for the long weekend and generally good weather prevailed through the second weekend.

### Riverboat Days Promotions:

The promotions strategy followed previous years and comprised the following:

- approximately 100 Riverboat Days 2018 posters printed, mostly distributed in Terrace and Thornhill but also reaching Visitor Centres in Stewart, New Hazelton and Kitimat.
- a print run of 6000 of the Official Program/Booklet, produced by Black Press, and distributed through retail outlets and gathering places free of charge in the Terrace area.
- radio campaigns on Bell Media and CFNR. With Bell Media the Riverboat Days Society undertook its third “Big Bang Contest” with the winner lighting the blackpowder cannon which marks the opening of Riverboat Days. Radio is also used to communicate important messages such as road closures for events such as the Fireworks.
- print and radio advertising consistently repeat a message to visit the Riverboat Days website for the most up to date information.
- The website ([www.riverboatdays.ca](http://www.riverboatdays.ca)) is a comprehensive resource of information about Riverboat Days. The website hosts Event Schedules, registration forms, venue maps and similar tools for those attending Riverboat Days. But it also has information about the Society, sponsorship information and a section on the history of sternwheeler traffic on the Skeena River.

- Complementing the website, the Riverboat Days Facebook page is especially useful as a vehicle for communicating last minute information. The Facebook page has 530 followers.

### **Website Statistics:** (July 1 through August 12)

Website traffic patterns have been very consistent over the years. There is minimal traffic during the “off season,” then gradual increase beginning in the early spring (summer holiday planning?), then more significant traffic rising through July and a massive surge approaching and during the August long weekend. Traffic declines substantially after this first weekend.

It was apparent early in July that website traffic in 2018 was going to be much higher than previous years. The first comprehensive Riverboat Days events schedule generally is posted on the website in the first week of July (and revised as required). Therefore, most of our focus in monitoring website traffic is for the period commencing July 1 through the end of that year’s Riverboat Days (2016: August 7; 2017: August 13; 2018: August 12).

For 2018, the website received an average of 480 “Sessions” per day and a peak of 2760 Sessions. This compares with 2017 (355 Sessions/Day; peak of 1985 Sessions) and 2016 (377 Sessions/Day and peak of 2495 Sessions).

A main purpose for visiting the website is to view or download the Events Schedule. In 2018 the Riverboat Days Events Schedules were downloaded 6460 times. This is a slight drop from 2017 (6745 times) but much higher than 2016 (4500+). But it also appears that other pages and files on the website were getting more downloads than previous years. For example, a listing of the events for each day was downloaded in 2018 1190 times compared with just 670 in 2017. Similar trends are seen for other files posted on the website.

The schedule or performers for Concerts in the Park is a file often viewed or downloaded from the website. This year the schedule was received quite late (in the last week prior to Riverboat Days). It was downloaded this year 335 times; in 2017 it was downloaded 545 times. The website also includes a write up and image of the headline act and posts the Concerts in the Park poster.

### **Event Attendance:**

Most events at Riverboat Days are free of charge and not ticketed. Therefore, crowd counts are difficult to undertake and are at best estimates. Readers are advised to view on the Riverboat Days website the 2017 *Audience Estimates and Quick Facts*, which contain good quality crowd estimates gathered with the assistance of the Youth Volunteer Corps of the Terrace Volunteer Bureau.

Due to commitments to the Parade and their own Soapbox Derby event, the Youth Volunteers Corps could not assist with crowd counts this year. The only event in which the Riverboat Days Society performed a crowd count was the mid-week Movie in the Park.

### **Movie in the Park:**

The outdoor Movie in the Park is held at dusk on the Wednesday evening. It is organized by the City of Terrace Recreation Department, supported by the Terrace Riverboat Days Society and private sponsors. In just three years it has become a very popular event within Riverboat Days

and becoming a key to the Society's efforts to build up the mid week program. In 2017, there was a late decision to change the start time of the film, creating some problems for estimating the crowd, as many people arrived after the film start.

The method for counting the Movie crowd this year closely matched the method used in 2017. A member of the Terrace Riverboat Days Society using a clicker/counter walked through the crowd prior to the film start. Due to impending darkness the count must be undertaken swiftly and then a visual inspection of the crowd made later to estimate late arrivals. For a 10 pm movie start, the crowd count took place between 9:45 pm and 9:55 pm. The recorded number was 764 people. The later inspection produced a reliable audience estimate of between 800 and 900 people. This compares well with the 2017 estimate of 700-800 and the rough estimate from 2016 of 300-400. The 2016 Movie was held in marginal weather on a cool evening. The 2017 event held in perfect summer conditions. The 2018 Movie was held during a period of fine weather but temperatures dropped noticeably the evening of the Movie.

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