

Event Report

for the 2011 Dunedin Midwinter Carnival

The 2011 Dunedin Midwinter Carnival was held as planned on 25 June in the Octagon. This was preceded by three weekends of public lantern making workshops in different parts of Dunedin. These were well attended with some workshops selling out in advance for the first time.

The main event was held in the Octagon with the roads closed back to Moray Place on all sides. A large lantern procession featuring the public workshop lanterns, giant lanterns made by artists, over 70 costumed dancers, drummers, stiltwalkers and musicians was the event highlight. Food stalls, music and fireworks completed the event.

Comments from the Audience Survey shows that people appreciate that they can be directly involved in the event as participants. They like the fact that we change the theme each year and they also appreciate that the event is in the early evening for the benefit of children.

A huge effort was put into costuming, working with a number of performance groups and the construction of giant lanterns. The result was a spectacular event that was highly unique to Dunedin. The atmosphere in the Octagon was fantastic and the comments by audiences through our online survey very positive.

The Carnival was well attended with widespread media coverage prior and post event, including prime time television coverage. This was a well-run and highly accessible event of a high artistic standard that actively engaged the community.

Achievements

- ❖ Highest audience turnout in the history of the event – an estimated 10,000 people.
- ❖ Three highly successful lantern-making workshops held in three different venues around the city – South Dunedin, North East Valley, and the city centre. The workshops were attended by 350 families involving over 700 people.
- ❖ 8 performance groups involving 100 people in the event. This shows strong engagement with the arts community at a number of levels. This included St Hilda's School, Warrington School drummers, University of Otago dance students, Songbong, Koru Dance, Wassa Wassa, Manawa Kapahaka, Ake Ake Theatre, and stiltwalkers.
- ❖ 80 volunteers recruited, trained and managed to realise the event. Roles included lantern making instructors, crowd safety team, procession guides, performer assistants, donation collectors and more.
- ❖ Professionally produced and safe event. The feedback on the event was very positive with high rates of satisfaction recorded.
- ❖ Extensive media coverage valued at \$65,000. National coverage through prime time One News.

How your support was acknowledged

- Sargood Bequest logo on event posters widely distributed throughout Dunedin
- Sargood Bequest logo in 2,000 event programmes distributed to audience on night of Carnival event
- Sargood Bequest funding acknowledged on Carnival website – www.midwintercarnival.co.nz

2011 Audience Survey results

An online survey was conducted following the 2011 Carnival event. The sample size was 51 respondents. Key results included:

- 88% thought the Carnival procession was of a high artistic standard
- 94% thought the Carnival was well organised
- 94% satisfied or very satisfied with event

Survey comments

“Loved that you had a lantern making workshop especially for the little kids... Beautiful night weather wise and lanterns looked amazing. Hats off to the organisers!”

“It was a lovely atmosphere, and to have so many children participate was just lovely. We came from Christchurch especially for it, and got friends from Nelson and Wanaka to join us there.”

“I love the spectacle, and it's so family friendly. A real visual treat. It's free. It feels like a community event. Everyone is there because they want to be. It just feels WONDERFUL.”

“I love the family party atmosphere - something fun for the whole family - in the middle of winter. It's nice to have fireworks on at a time that isn't too late for even little kids to see! There is a 'home-grown' feel about the carnival.”

“Just a really great atmosphere, and looked very well planned, seems to get better each year.”

“It was magical! Really well planned, incredible costumes, wonderful sounds, lots of happy faces. Amazing for our little 2 year old to watch and listen to!”

“I loved the costumes. I loved the drumming. I loved the Maori introduction to the parade. I loved the way 'ordinary' people were allowed in the parade.”