

15 Palmarès

15.1 Choice of venue

Before any enquiries can be made of possible venues an estimate of numbers likely to attend is needed. This number will include any complementary tickets e.g. jury, commissioners, NZ Post, trade stands, MC, committee, etc.

It is important not to consider these complementary tickets as 'free' tickets. Most jury members limit the claims they could make for travel; commissioners generally also accept a lot of personal cost to support the exhibition; NZ Post and NZSDA have contributed significantly to the income and interest in the show; and, the committee have contributed a lot of personal effort, time and cost to ensure the show is a success. However, it should not be expected the paying attendees will necessarily be covering the full cost of the event – this might lead to excessive ticket prices.

Consider the type of meal – often a buffet style as this provides choices for guests – and what options there may be for any special dietary requirements. Those who do have dietary requirements generally make these known but it is still wise to ask for advice of any they do have.

Should there be complementary drinks? It is becoming more common to not provide alcoholic drinks. Many of the attendees may have to drive and therefore limit any drinks they might like, and some do not drink. Both groups may 'object' to subsidising those who drink. However, the venue should be able to provide a bar service so those who wish to drink may choose to do so.

When investigating venues critical factors will include:

- Cost including any confirmation fee, progress payments, etc. all of which can impact on the cash flow for the show and the final cost.
- Location and accessibility. How easy is to find and get to the site from the main accommodation locations – particularly for jury, commissioners and dealers? Given some attendees may have mobility problems is the site easily accessible and what provisions can be made for their movement during the evening or in the event of an emergency.
- Shape and capacity of area. Sufficient space is needed to ensure people can easily, and quickly, make their way to the presentation area from any position and this area should also be visible to everyone at the venue.
- Impact of other users of the venue. Where the venue caters for multiple groups, it is important others do not impinge visually or, more importantly, audibly on the Palmarès proceedings. Consideration also needs to be taken on any impact the Palmarès may have on other users to reduce any likelihood of complaint during the event.
- Equipment. An important aspect is to ensure the MC and other speakers can be easily heard. There is a need to check what speaker systems are available and whether use implies additional costs. Many venues also supply background music and it is important this can be controlled both in terms of volume and timing by the hirer.
- Flexibility on numbers. Unfortunately purchase of Palmarès ticket are often the last choice for attendees at the exhibition but the venue generally wants confirmed numbers at the opening of the show – i.e. at least two days before the Palmarès. The organising committee will have to make a judgement call on how many tickets they will be able to sell recognising any unsold tickets will incur a cost (as charges will normally be based on a per head basis whether people arrive or not). Place settings will be based on the number provided by the committee and clearly selling more tickets than have been catered for can create major issues.

For the Capital Stamp Show 2015 the venue chosen for the Palmarès had a minimum 'spend' requirement. This 'spend' included purchases at the bar (as the organising committee decided not to provide alcohol) as well as a per head dinner charge. This provided a good degree of flexibility, and the committee were, with some degree of confidence, able to take a risk on last minute sales. As it happens, they had fewer ticket sales than hoped for, but this meant there was plenty of food for those who were present and no unexpected, additional costs were imposed.

After considering the options, including menu and drink provisions, the committee will agree on a preferred venue and make bookings.

15.2 Contact with venue

Once the contract with the venue has been signed it is important to maintain a liaison with the venue contact person, particularly in the last few weeks leading up to the event. This contact will often provide dividends in terms of making last minute adjustments arising from attendee numbers (e.g. layouts) or in the programme (timings of courses). It is also possible changes in personnel at the venue may occur and the on-going contact ensures no glitches arise because of that.

For the Capital Stamp Show 2015 a change took place at the Palmarès venue in the original specifications relating to food service areas and this had implications for the 'head table', the speaker's podium, and the numbers of people that could be catered for. Because good contact had been maintained alternatives were able to be discussed with the venue and a solution, better than the original, was arrived at.

15.3 Tickets

Based on the costs that have been established for the venue a ticket price has to be determined. While it could be very desirable to fully cost recover the event, the aspect of 'complementary' tickets described above needs to be considered. While ticket purchases can be used to cover some of the complementary pass 'costs' the level of price should be carefully assessed to ensure those who should be present (i.e. the exhibitors) are not deterred from attending.

Once the ticket price has been established sales should be advertised in the next Bulletins and, where this is possible, also be on sale at the entry to the exhibition.

The tickets are designed and printed. Some exhibitions have numbered the tickets for the purpose of providing random prizes for attendees as well as assisting with recording those who are to be there.

It is important to record the ticket purchaser name, particularly exhibitors who will be receiving awards, as this will have a big impact on the Palmarès programme. The MC needs to avoid naming people who are not present and ensure naming everyone who is.

The committee will determine when the last time tickets can be sold or, alternatively, determine the maximum number to be sold. Both will depend on the contract with the Palmarès venue and when they need final numbers. If the venue has adequate space and has sufficient flexibility to allow sales up to a certain time, then setting a final sale time is clearly the option. However, if the time set is limited (e.g. before or shortly after the opening time for the exhibition) or space is restricted the committee has to make a decision as to how many additional tickets they may be able to sell before the event and set a maximum number.

15.4 Master of ceremonies

It is important the MC is a confident speaker and is familiar with Palmarès functions and well known to the audience. These latter qualities are probably more important than their ability to tell good jokes or otherwise entertain a crowd. Consequently, the MC should be conscious of factors that can make a Palmarès run smoothly and of things that should be avoided.

It is important the MC is involved in the planning of the programme and time is provided to allow the MC to have a full briefing prior to the event with everyone involved in running it and to gain some familiarity with the venue if they have not already visited the site.

15.5 Awards List

The Awards List contains the Jury chairman's report and often a photograph of the jury (see 7.6); the list of special prizes and the recipients (see 10.4) with the exception of the Grand Award and Runner-up to the Grand Award; and, the list of all exhibits with the award each achieved. This information is provided by the jury secretary.

The content is often only finalised around midday on the day of the Palmarès which means the award List is printed during that afternoon, commonly a Saturday. To ensure this can occur, prior arrangements with the selected printer should be made so the print job can proceed without delay.

It has been common for the Awards List to be produced with a light card cover, printed in colour and containing advertising to defray the cost of printing. This generally matches the exhibition catalogue in size and design. It is important to determine whether the printer can:

- Print the entire publication (including cover) and assemble, staple and fold.

- Print the enclosed material and insert into a pre-printed cover, assemble, staple and fold.
- Print only the enclosed material.

If only the last option is available the cover is pre-printed and a small team of volunteers are required to manually insert, assemble, staple and fold the Awards List.

Sufficient copies of the Awards List for one per attendee should be available at the Palmarès. The remaining copies should be sufficient to allow every exhibitor not at the Palmarès to have a copy inserted in their exhibit envelope. It is normal to print additional copies for distribution at the exhibition the day after the Palmarès. However, these should only be released by the bin room manager once they have ensured there are sufficient for the exhibitors.

15.6 Certificates, medals and prizes

As noted in chapter 10 the certificates, medals and prizes required for the Palmarès should be assembled and transferred to the Palmarès venue under the guidance of the bin room manager before the guests arrive.

The certificates should have been sorted to match the programmed delivery to recipients and the prizes, preferably labelled, should be on display and readily accessible for distribution.

15.7 Reserved tables / places

Head table

Normally the only table which is reserved and has place names is the 'head table'. This table should normally have at least the following people:

- The MC (who should be able to easily access any podium and microphone used).
- Chairman of the organising committee.
- Senior representative of NZ Post present (often the Manager Collectables).
- NZSDA representative on the committee.
- Jury chairman.

If space permits, the head table could include any Commissioner and the partners of these people.

Other reserved spaces

There will be a number of people who are required to assist in the running of the evening and it is desirable they have reserved, suitably located, places. Such people will include those who:

- Man the door and check tickets (they may also be used to pass out the Awards List).
- Assist with the distribution of the certificates, medals and prizes.
- Assist the auctioneer in displaying the lots or, because of their seating position can readily identify the successful bidders.

If someone has a mobility problem, particularly if they are in a wheelchair, they should be located where they can gain easy access to their location, the meal, toilets and emergency exits. The venue management should be happy to assist in siting any such person as they will have the best idea of location and will need to ensure the person is suitably aided if an emergency should occur.

15.8 Auction

This can provide a real boost to funding and details of the type of material that can be included is described at 4.11. The material will have been assembled well before the exhibition and is transported to the Palmarès venue on the evening.

An auction list should be prepared and be available at each seating position. At some exhibitions this list is on the reverse of the menu or on an insert for the Awards List.

Well before the Palmarès the committee will have decided on an auctioneer and that person has agreed. An experienced stamp auctioneer is preferable as they will be familiar with the audience and have a good understanding of possible prices that can be attained.

The organising committee will have discussed and agreed with the auctioneer the expectations for each lot including a starting price and 'good' price. These will hopefully be very conservative figures, but the auctioneer does not have the time to second guess what might be acceptable during the auction.

The lots should be available for inspection before the auction starts and time allowed for this.

15.9 Photography

Photographs of the evening should be taken and a person with suitable equipment appointed to do this. The photographs will appear in various later society newsletters reporting the event and on the exhibition webpage.

The 'official' photographer will take photographs throughout the evening but most importantly will be taking photographs of the various presentations. The photographer needs to assess the best position for taking these presentation photographs to minimise any obstruction to the view of the audience and, because of the location of windows, glass or other reflecting surface may have a say in the position of the presenters and the recipients to ensure the best images.

At some Palmarès the presentations to individuals have been obscured from the audience by the presence of individuals wishing to take photographs of partners or friends. This problem has been exacerbated in some cases, with recipients being asked to come up *en masse* (e.g. all the Silver medal winners at once). The committee needs to consider whether they can call one person up at a time or determine what form of control, if any, in positioning photographers. In the latter case the MC should be briefed and announce the policy.

15.10 Programme

While the venue management has some degree of flexibility when the programme is being established this flexibility may be constrained on the night because of the need to ensure the various courses can be served at their best and due to staff rostering, other activities at the venue, etc.

It is probably easier for the MC to work around service times than expect the venue to vary their times. Venue management should ensure any delays that might arise with service are made known to the MC who should be able to adjust the programme of presentations accordingly.

The MC should welcome everyone and provide the normal information about emergency exits, toilets, etc and any procedures to be followed (e.g. photography as in 15.9) and provide a broad outline of the evening's programme particularly when the various courses will be served and how.

Normal schedule of activities at past exhibitions is as follows:

- Chairman of the organising committee welcomes everyone, makes a small speech and makes presentations to:
 - NZ Post and NZSDA representatives
 - NZPF co-ordinator
 - Committee members, any special helpers or other person who is to be recognised; and
 - Jury chairman.
- Jury chairman then makes presentations to jury members.
- Certificates and medals are then presented. The MC reads the names in order from the schedule provided starting with any Bronze awards and working up to Large Gold. These are generally grouped by medal level (although serious consideration should be given to bringing people up one at a time rather than having all recipients of a medal type at once) and breaks for meal service can be inserted as appropriate.

A committee member (often the exhibits or bin room manager) or jury secretary passes the appropriate certificate and medal to the jury chairman who passes these over with congratulations to the recipient and pauses for any photograph.

- Presentation of prizes then commences. These are normally presented as follows:
 - Special prizes – handed over by a selected person e.g. President of the host society.

- NZPF travelling awards – handed over by NZPF President or NZPF executive member.
- Campbell Paterson Award and Mowbray Award – handed over by a representative of the respective companies.
- Youth Grand Award– president or executive member of PYC.
- Grand Award and Runner-Up to the Grand Award – presented by senior NZ Post person present.

These last two awards are voted by the jury members and the result is not known until a count is made at the venue at this time by two people (normally the jury secretary and an apprentice neither of whom vote). The votes are in an envelope and only if the votes are tied is the Chairman's casting vote, held in a second envelope, used.

Normally there are two nominees, and both are present (or are represented by another person e.g. the Commissioner if it was an overseas exhibit) at the presentation area. The result of the vote is made known to the MC who announces the winner and runner-up who are then presented with the appropriate award.

- A representative of the organising committee for the next national Philatelic Exhibition makes a brief presentation describing and inviting everyone to attend their event.
- Auction.
- Closure and farewell from MC.