



International Festivals & Events Association

Thérèse St-Onge, CFEE 2006 IFEA Hall of Fame Inductee National Capital Commission



Born in Edmundston, New Brunswick, Canada, Thérèse St-Onge, CFEE has had an envious career in Canada's capital city.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in physical education from the University of Moncton, New Brunswick, Thérèse's first work experience in Ottawa was as a page for the Senate of Canada from 1974 to 1976, while she was pursuing further education in leisure studies and in a masters program in physical education.

Thérèse started her career in the public events and services field for the National Capital Commission in 1977. She is presently Senior Program Manager of Events and Celebrations at the commission. Her career has been mapped by her networking abilities and her vigour. She has occupied several assignments of increasing responsibility at the National Capital Commission, becoming the Senior Project Manager for Canada Day celebrations from 1984 to 1987 and then, from 1987 to 1989, for Winterlude, a major winter festival in the national capital that has an annual regional economic impact of over \$70 million.

From 1990 to 1992, Thérèse was dedicated to two special projects. The first was an assignment at the Privy Council of Canada as a Senior Analyst for the Public Liaison and Constitutional Affairs program in reference to the Canadian constitutional referendum of 1992, an important element in Canada's history. The second was the responsibility to co-ordinate the rejuvenation of an Alpine ski center situated on National Capital Commission lands. Both of these roles required extensive liaison with partners from federal government agencies as well as the private sector.

Since 1993, Thérèse has been responsible for the Events and Celebrations Program at the National Capital Commission, including Canada Day and Winterlude as well as acting as the liaison with numerous festivals in the region organized by private sector and community organizations. Her dedication to her work and her superior interpersonal skills have not gone unnoticed, and Thérèse has often been the subject of important local and national media coverage. The highlight of her career came in June of 1999 when both the Ottawa Citizen, the most important English language newspaper in the area, and the National Post did a feature article on her work in preparation of Canada Day, outlining that around Parliament Hill Thérèse is known as "Queen of the Hill". It has been said that regardless of the difficulty at hand, Thérèse never becomes discouraged and maintains constant concern for the public good and for costs. With determination, open-mindedness, and a healthy dose of expertise, she strives to seek out options and find solutions.

Beyond her work in the capital, Thérèse has become known for many noteworthy accomplishments in other areas including: working at the Summer Olympics held in Montreal,

Canada; serving on the Board of Directors of the World Loppett cross-country skiing organization; successfully organizing an event commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the United Way campaign in the City of Gatineau; and serving as a member of the Advisory Board of the Festivals and Events Management program at the Algonquin Community College since 1998.

In March 2002, she was the recipient of the Chairman's award at the National Capital Commission for the high quality of her efforts and achievements as manager of Winterlude. In October of that same year, she also received the Commemorative Medal for the Queen's Jubilee recognizing her outstanding career in the programming of the national events.

Following up on that, Thérèse was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Festivals and Events Ontario (FEO) organization in recognition of her achievements in the festivals and events industry in the province of Ontario. She was also selected as one of the personalities of the year by the local French language newspaper Le Droit and the French language television Radio Canada.

Thérèse has been an active IFEA member since 1984. In 1988, she played a prominent role in the organization of the IFEA conference held in Ottawa. She was on the IFEA Board of Directors for many years, has been involved in a number of IFEA committees with the Foundation, and earned the designation of CFEE in 1993. She was a judge for the parades of the Pro Football Hall of Fame Festival in 1993, the Kentucky Derby Festival in 2002 and the Macon, Georgia's International Cherry Blossom Festival in 2004. Most importantly, in 2003, Thérèse was Chairwoman of the IFEA Board of Directors. She was the IFEA's first and still remains the sole non-U.S. chairperson in its fifty years of history.