

A Short History of the DanceFlurry Organization

by Don Bell, November 2012



Roots

Bob Henshaw & Old
Songs Winter Dancefest
February 1986



Paul Rosenberg &
Pat Melitta
Dance Flurry
February 1988



Roots (cont'd)

- Winter Dancefest was a model for the Flurry Festival with some differences
 - Mostly local musicians
 - profits for struggling Pittsfield dance and the local Hudson Mohawk Country Dancers organization (HMCD).
- Paul's local contra dance HMCD became Hudson Mohawk Traditional Dancers Inc. (HMTD) with non-profit status through CDSS. Flurry Festival got non-profit status through HMTD.

DFO Board - Original Purpose

- Financial responsibility for Flurry – avoid bankruptcy, stealing, conflict of interest
- Financial support for local contra dances
- Most of Board composed of contra dance organizers
- very few meetings a year
- Pat & Paul were perpetual Board executives or Board members

DFO Board – Bylaw Development

Michael Kernan - President 2003- 2004

His legal background very helpful in writing
the DFO Bylaws

<http://www.danceflurry.org/bylaws>

Comment: at this time sponsored dance
series had their own checkbooks – little
accountability.

Change in the Flurry Festival Management

- many years under the “charismatic leader” model, with much of the direction and energy coming from founder Paul Rosenberg.
- About 2005 - Flurry responsibilities split between 3 people – Peter Davis, program and booking, Doug Haller, logistics, and Ginny Gokhale, finances.
- Difficult transition, scary – but things came together very well for 2006 event

2006 - A Mighty Wind Changed Everything

- Wind knocked out the power for the entire 2006 festival weekend
- \$100,000 financial loss
- Fundraising campaign – quickly recovered – due to the generosity of our performers, our dancers, dance organizers, and the local community
- Now we have dance event insurance
- Crisis accelerated organizational changes

July 2006 Board Retreat


– Focus On Mission, Values

- President Bill Matthiesen organized a Board retreat moderated by Ben Markens, who helped us define our mission, core values, objectives.
- See 'About' page on web site
- Now a much larger role – supporting traditional dance & music in the whole community, not just focused on being a watchdog for the Festival

Brand Development (2006 to present)

- Changing name from Hudson Mohawk Traditional Dancers Inc. (HMTD) to dba DanceFlurry Organization (DFO)
- HMTD an abbreviation for a chemical compound found in blasting caps.
- Fits with web site: www.danceflurry.org
- Simplicity - danceflurry - short, easy to remember, already an established brand
- Some resistance & confusion over names at first but eventually gained acceptance

Brand Development (2006 to present)

- DFO logo The logo for Dance Flurry Organization features a stylized, multi-colored swirl on the left, composed of segments in purple, blue, green, and yellow. To the right of the swirl, the words "Dance Flurry" are written in a blue, cursive script font, and the word "ORGANIZATION" is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.
- catch phrase/mission – ‘connecting and inspiring (people) through traditional music and dance’.
- Guidelines for logo use by Festival and dance organizers
- Eventually, Festival re-branded as Flurry Festival – more than just dance activities
- New logo and domain name:
flurryfestival.org

Email List Development (started in 2007)

- Started Google Groups email lists for Festival Planning, Festival attendees, DFO Board and DFO members
- Allowed mass mailings, subscribing online, archived emails that you can search or browse
- 2011 moved Festival attendees and DFO members & friends to Constant Contact
- Now Contacts: Festival - 1256 DFO - 915

Web Site Development (started ~ 2006)

- One web page to many pages
- Added dance calendar
- 2009 – Content management system
- Dance organizers responsible for their own web page and dance calendar
- Master dance calendar
- Links to photos, videos, newsletters, Facebook page, online resources
- Formstack online forms for membership, donations, volunteering

Dance Event Development

- Started with just a few sponsored series
 - Saratoga, 8th Step?, Buhrmaster Barn, others?
- Now ~16 different supported events
- DFO provides insurance and marketing
- 2 types of agreements
 - Sponsored dances
 - Affiliates
- Adirondack Dance Weekend – revamped
- New events – Swing, English, Contra

DFO Marketing Communications

- Started with flyers delivered by hand, snail mailings and simple emails
- Had a Dance Hotline up till 2008
- Monthly dance calendar emails (started ~ 2005)
- Yearly DFO Print Newsletter (started 2007)
- DFO Info Table at Flurry (started ~ 2007)

DFO Marketing Communications

- DFO Photo Posters & banners used for outreach events (e.g. Flurry Festival)
- DFO/Flurry joint business cards
- DFO Dance Coupon business cards
- DFO Brochure/Flyer
- DFO dancer name buttons
- DFO Facebook page
- Latest News items on home page
- DFO Member/Donor reception event at Flurry Festival

Youth Initiatives

- Rosalee Ruediger-Hamelin and Naomi Wimberley-Hartman worked on two important youth projects.
- 1) a school residency for musicians
- 2) a summer program scholarship for two high school interns.
- Maura McNamara put together a youth-oriented contra dance megaband.

DFO Administration Developments

- Hired Lorraine Weiss as DFO administrator – 2006?
- DFO Board Web Site for agenda and online document storage
- Access database for membership
- Official Non-Profit Status 2011?

Fundraising Developments

- Flurry Festival director Doug Haller facilitated two \$10,000 political grants
- Jen Brown/Chrissie Van Wormer obtained a \$10,000 Google AdWords grant and applied for a number of other grants
- Raised \$8000 for the Flurry Floor Project – money will be returned

