

Meadows Festival battles through bitter cold

This year's Meadows Festival drew the usual crowds as thousands of visitors descended upon the park, hoping to enjoy the eclectic mix of culinary, musical and visual delights.

The event promised to be larger than ever with a record number of stalls selling everything from 'bric a brac' and hemp clothing to massage lessons, and the atmosphere was certainly one of a full blooded festival.

The two performance stages were in constant use, the rhythmic drumming supporting the various dance troops rarely ceased and there was the usual plethora of picnic rugs, hookahs and dreadlocks.

The weekend was not without its problems however. For the second year running inclement weather put a slight dampener on proceedings. This year the rain was substituted for the cold, and some regular volunteers felt this made a notable impact.

Helen Blackburn who volunteers for the Salvation Army, and who has run a stall for the charity for the past four years said.

"It perhaps hasn't been as busy as in previous years and we may not have had quite as much passing trade, but we do seem to have sold an unusually large number of hats and gloves."

Linda Hendry, a stalwart volunteer for the Meadows Festival Association, who was involved with the first ever staging of the event in 1974, suggests that it's hard to judge the events attendance.

"There may be a few less visitors than last year, but of course it's hard to tell whether people are here specifically

for the festival or whether they just stumble upon it, or even if they are just out walking their dog”



One stall that did find the weekend a fruitful affair however was the Williams Brothers bar. The Alloa based brewery used the festival as the launch venue for their new product, a real draught alcoholic ginger beer, a UK first. Spokesperson for the company Richard McLelland said:-

“If the weekend had brought us the kind of weather we had on Thursday and Friday I think it would have been a raging success, but as it was it still gave us a chance to exhibit our new beers and everyone had a really good time.... I think there will certainly be some future relationship between the Williams Brothers Brewery and the Meadows festival.”

Margaret Attmen who ran a stall selling jewellery which she designed and made herself, also found the festival a positive experience.

“Of course people are moaning about the cold, but I think the fact that about 10,000 people still showed up is testament to the kind of community spirit this festival is built around.”